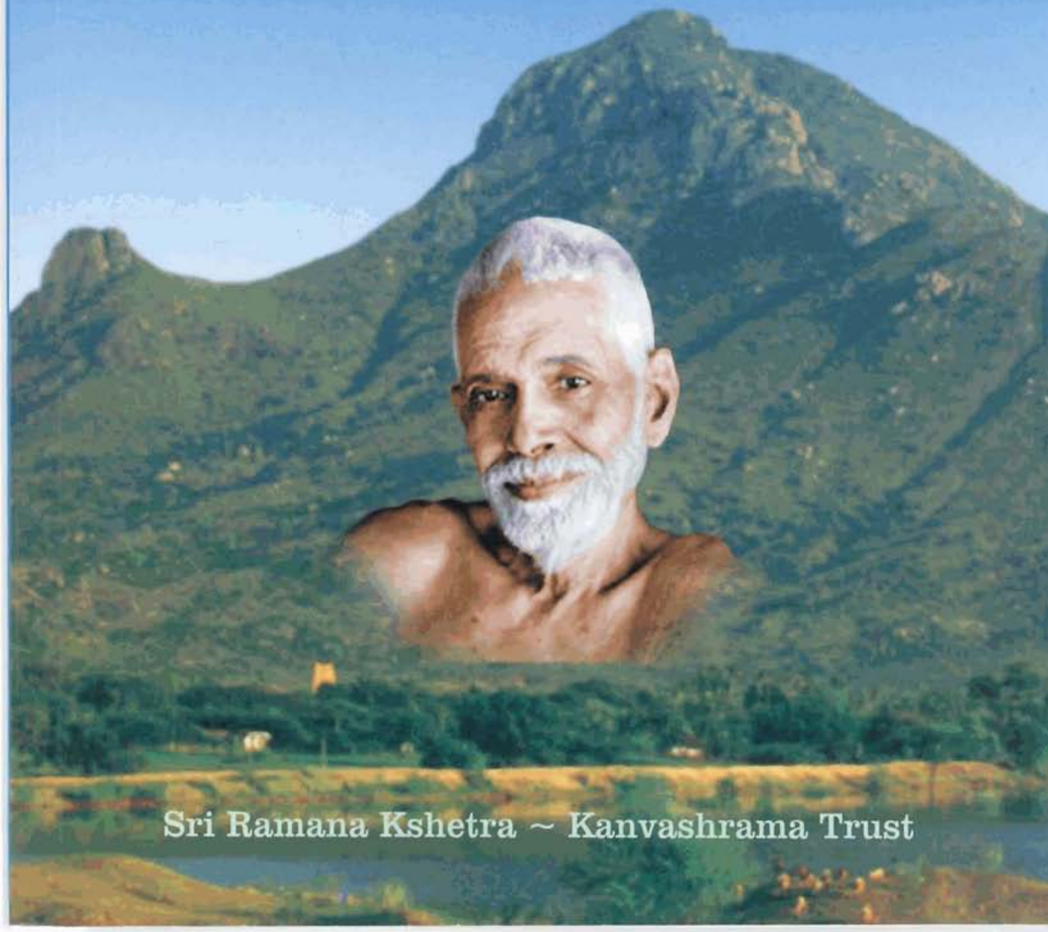
The Path of Sri Ramana

(Part Two)

By

Sri Sadhu Om



Sri Ramana Kshetra ~ Kanvashrama Trust

The Path of Sri Ramana

PART TWO

(An Exposition of the teachings of
Sri Ramana Maharshi on
God, World, Bhakti and Karma)

Sri Sadhu Om

Sri Ramana Kshetra
(Kanvashrama Trust)
TIRUVANNAMALAI
INDIA

The Path of Shri Ramana (Part Two) English by Sri Sadhu Om,
Published by Sri Ramana Kshetra, Kanvashrama Trust,
Tiruvannamalai - 606 603.

First Edition : 1976
Second Edition : 1997
Third Edition : 2006 : 1000 Copies

Price : Rs.

Typeset and Printed by
Aridra Printers, Bangalore-560 003.
Phone : 23346025

Acknowledgements

To Sri Michael James for his kind permission to publish this PDF e-book of 'The Path of Sri Ramana Part 2' on our website.

To Sri. N. Sankaran for his constructive advice and permission to use a hard copy of 'The Path of Sri Ramana Part 2' to produce a PDF e-book version of the book.

This e-book is available for free download from:

www.sageramana.org

Contents

Publisher's Note - III Edition

We are very glad to present here to the aspirant seekers on the 'Path of Sri Ramana', this new revised and corrected third edition of Sri Sadhu Om Swamigal "The Path of Sri Ramana - Part II".

In the previous second edition an attempt was made to improve the general lay-out and printing with the help then of Sri Michael James, but, it felt short, than the initial stage of the first thirty pages.

Now with the invaluable assistance and precise dedication of Sri N. Shankaran, who was the very first publisher of this book, when saw its first publication back in 1976, and now, we can finally offer this new re-print in a more concise form (only as the outer form-shell, the substance is unchanged; how could it be otherwise!).

We also feel very grateful to our founder - President the (late) Sri Hamsaji (Mr. J.J. De Reede) for inspiring us and giving the inward push and outer means to continue this labour of Love, started by him and likeminded friends. In the previous edition he put a "Publisher's Warning" : "Don't seek ! Find ! "That is, what this extermely dangerous book is about. Fatefully and mortally perilous to me - (the ego), it could "end-away" ... truly ! Because, as Sri Bhagavan Ramana advices us through the mouthpiece of the outhor, 'Real-Happiness' is just the opposite of what we think we know... so, let us DO, and not see ! But,

just BE ! "Be Still" *(Summa Iru)*, is the real service to GOD and to the GURU.

Many thanks and much obliged to Mr. Pandurangan of Aridra Printers for being so enthusiastic and selfless dedication towards the production of this work. Thank you Sir !

110th Advent Day	Skanda Bhakta C. Rossi
1st September, 2006	President, Kanvashrama Trust

Publisher's Note - II Edition

Publisher's Warning

Don't seek! FIND!

That is what this extremely dangerous little book is about.

Fatefully dangerous to the ego (Ahankara) true, because to be Happy is the highest wisdom.

But to find unconditional Happiness we have to face an inner bifurcation: do we want to better the condition of ourselves, actors in the film–or do we want the experience of the *screen*.

Sample: It is said Sri Ramana Maharshi was once approached by a naive person who said he did not "mind Moksha or Liberation" but he "wanted to be there to enjoy it" himself. With His divine patience the Maharshi explained why this is not feasible–Moksha implying the absence of any "person" which implies having given away or "surrendered" one's individuality.

21 Years have passed for the first edition of this book to gain a slight improvement, in the language mainly, which the untiring Michael James has accomplished with his dedicated fervour.

As usual, Skanda Bhakta (C. Rossi) co-Founder of this Trust has been the selfless engine pushing this production.

Thanking you, Bhagavan.

Karthikai Deepam
1997.

Hamsanandan J.J. de Reede, M.A.,
President, Kanvasrama Trust

Publisher's Note - I Edition

In his preface to the Tamil publication of "The Path of Sri Ramana" – Part I, Dr. R. Santanam has narrated the circumstances that led to the birth of the book. He also expressed his wishes to see to the publication in Tamil of the remaining parts of the manuscripts consisting of the answers of Sri Sadhu Om to the questions of many devotees of Sri Bhagavan on the paths of Bhakti and Karma, 'about the creation' of the world and other points which are a puzzle to the modern mind. Dr. R. Santanam is no longer with us, having reached Sri Bhagavan's Feet on the 11th June, 1973. He was not able to carry out his intention, but his intention was powerful enough to accomplish itself and the Tamil original of "The Path of Sri Ramana – Part II" is, about to be published.

When a copy of the Tamil publication of the book (Part I) was sent to Sri M. Anantanarayanan, I. C. S., Retired Chief Justice, Madras, he at once felt 'the necessity for an English translation and expressed his opinion that many of the Western devotees of Sri Bhagavan would appreciate and be benefited by it. That too came to be true in 1971 when the City Press, Kanpur, published the English version of "The Path of Sri Ramana-Part I". Now another devotee; this time from overseas, Mr. Richard Osorio felt the need for the publication of the Part II of the book in English, though the Tamil publication has not yet been released. So once more Sri Sadhu Om had to undertake the translation of those chapters, as he alone can convey from Tamil to English the accurate meaning and spirit

of the subject and once more he was ably assisted by Swami Dhakappaji and other friends.

Upadesha (instruction) will be possible only when the Reality is mistaken to be somewhere far away and when the necessity is felt to bring It near to the aspirant (Upa+desham = to show the nearness of what appears to be far). Sri Ramana did live the truth of Advaita, "Who else is there but I..." – Ulladu Narpadu-Supplement Verse 38. In His vision of Pure Truth neither the world nor any jeeva existed apart from Him. Therefore, there was not even the slightest inclination rising in Him to instruct the world; for, in His view the world was not different from Himself*. Then, how did we get His instructions in the form of verses? Do we not believe in a Supreme Entity who creates, sustains and destroys the universe? It was It alone who, taking the doubts, questions and prayers of devotees as the cause and using Sri Ramana's body, speech and mind as means gave the verses to save the world by dispelling its ignorance. Hence, Sri Ramana did not move away from Sri Arunachala nor did He instruct others of His own accord.

The author stands as an example of how those who follow the footsteps of such a Master should conduct their lives. He had no intention of writing a book and of his own accord he does not seek to instruct others. When seekers raise the doubts to him on spiritual matters he usually answers:- "Since you

* Though we use the past tense when talking or writing about Shri Ramana, the Sad-Guru, we should remember that the term **"living guru"** does not apply to the Sad-Guru who is always present. His Presence is not mere physical presence.

ask I have to answer in the light of Sri Bhagavan's teachings. After asking do not expect a consolation for an answer. I do not wish to please you by just giving you pacifying answers. I give you what I learnt from Sri Bhagavan. I can, when asked, also tell you about Paths other than Self-enquiry *(Atma Vichara)*, but only in the light of Sri Bhagavan's teachings. Sri Bhagavan alone is my authoritative Shastras. If the world does not agree with my views, it does not matter, let it throw them away!". Sri Sadhu Om does not seem to worry in the least about what others think about his views or how they are valued. The reader can take this as a reason why neither preface nor review were searched for. This book is published by those and for those who do appreciate his uncompromising adherence to the clear-cut path pointed out by Sri Bhagavan.

Our conception of *'Upadesha'*–'Spiritual Instruction' given by the Guru to the disciple is well wrapped in the veil of secrecy of the mantra ushered into our ear by the Guru, the many 'dos and don'ts' given by him and that of the high expectancy of hazy mental image of Realization! The secret of Upadesha is openly disclosed in both Part I and II of "The Path of Sri Ramana". When the aspirant, after being instructed into many 'dos and don'ts' and after practising them, comes to feel that he is most unfit for anything, when he comes to know that the ego is utterly inefficient, he experiences the uselessness of keeping the identification with it, that is, when he reaches the state of humility, there end all the sadhanas, and all the fruits of sadhanas which were not obtainable so long as the doership was present in him, are attained.

About the Author

Sri Sadhu Om hails from the Thanjavur district (in Tamil Nadu) which is famous as the centre of Tamil learning and culture. From his early childhood he was of a spiritual bent of mind showing great reverence towards Saints and Sages. In his early teens a poet in Tamil by divine Grace, the inspiration having come to him at the tender age of fourteen. His meeting and association with Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi brought his poetical genius to its full bloom and he has composed nearly six thousand songs and verses singing his devotion to his Guru Ramana or depicting the unique glory and the beauty of His life or expounding His philosophy in the most undiluted form in a language that is a marvel of simplicity and clarity that cannot fail to move our hearts and make us want to know more about Sri Bhagavan Ramana and about His instructions (*Upadesha*).

When answering questions Sri Sadhu Om's replies show that it is only through the Grace of Guru Ramana that he is able to do full justice to many subtle points from the standpoint of different listeners with a refreshing and joyful originality. Though his association with Sri Bhagavan Ramana lasted for five years only, "Coal takes time to ignite, but charcoal is proportionately quicker, while gun powder ignites immediately. So it is with men under the powerful glance of a Jnani" says Sri Bhagavan Ramana ('A Sadhu's Reminiscences of Ramana Maharshi'). The deep insight shown in this book, 'The Path of Sri Ramana' proves that he does not fall into the category of those,

"... ... who stay unmoving near
The Master of consummate knowledge
Age and die while their ego's darkness
Tarries like the steady shadow
Lurking at the lamp-post's - foot.
Such is perhaps their rawness still
From former births persisting."

– Guru Vachaka Kovai - Verse 101.

Through his association with Sri Bhagavan Ramana, Sri Sadhu Om was able to absorb the import of His words and through his long standing association with Swami Muruganar who was a great Tamil poet and the senior and foremost disciple of Sri Ramana, he had a direct access to the terse classical Tamil language in which Sri Bhagavan gave us His teachings. Moreover, his whole-hearted devotion towards his Guru Ramana and his one pointed adherence to His teachings made him a fit vessel for His Grace to flow and fill him through and through in such abundantly rich measure that the reader cannot but feel that he also partakes of that Grace. Thus Sri Sadhu Om had the three essential qualifications to explain the teachings of Sri Bhagavan Ramana to those who come to him looking for clarification. Although Sri Sadhu Om professes of not having a high command over English, yet with the help of those three essential qualifications he is well able to detect the faulty understanding of those who, per force, depend upon the English versions only in their approach to the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Note to the Reader

"Some books are to be tasted,
others to be swallowed, and some
few to be chewed and digested..." – Bacon.

This book should not only be digested but also assimilated and its contents should be applied in everyday life until it becomes part and parcel of one's own being.

Both Part I and II of "The Path of Sri Ramana" are meant particularly for the highly mature souls who are not ready to be cheated by blind beliefs. Repeated study and deep impartial reflection will reveal many subtle points which superficial reading is most likely to miss - the clarification about fate and free will, the deep significance of the Shastras (if at times they seem to contradict, it is only in order to make us understand their true value) and how a correct Self-surrender is nothing but a Self-enquiry and vice-versa.

How does this book justify its name 'THE PATH OF SRI RAMANA'? It is a known fact to the devotees of Sri Ramana that Self-enquiry and Self-surrender alone are His true teachings and that these two paths are well described in His original verses and prose works in Tamil. It is clearly understood by those who are well acquainted with Shri Ramana's works that the Ulladhu Narpadhu, the last fifteen verses of 'Upadesha Undiyar', 'The Song of Appalam', 'The Song of Self-Knowledge', 'The Five Verses on Self' and some of the verses in 'The Five Hymns on Sri Arunachala' as well

as in 'Guru Vachaka Kovai'* stand as an authority for Self-enquiry while Self-surrender is well described in the other verses of 'The Five Hymns'. The attention of the reader should be brought to the fact that 'The Path of Sri Ramana' (both Part I and II) is paved only with all these verses of Sri Bhagavan.

Though Sri Sadhu Om uses stories, some times amusing, sometimes heart-breaking, to convey the essence of Shri Bhagavan's words to us, this book is not a mere story book. Even and particularly through the stories taken from *Puranas*** such as the story of Namdev and the story of *'Acharas'*, Sri Sadhu Om gives us clues to bring our attention to the first person 'I'.

To the modern mind most of the scriptural statements seem to be more scholarly than practical; but, in this book the approach to the final aim of the aspirant is more practical than scholarly! Sri Ramana encourages us by giving us the assurance*** that the scriptural knowledge is not necessary to reach our aim, rather, it is an obstacle! This point is well brought home here. Whatever is expressed in this book can be verified by one's own observation and it can be applied to one's daily life; in fact it should be applied. **Mere reading of Sri Bhagavan's teachings will not reveal the Truth in its true light. The correct understanding is possible only to those who**

* Guru Vachaka Kovai :- A collection of Sri Bhagavan's words in verse form by Sri Muruganar. The English translation and commentry by Sri Sadhu Om has been published in 2005.

** Puranas:- Stories and legends in Hinduism.

*** Refer 'The Maharshi's Gospel'.

sincerely and one-pointedly adhere to the practice of what He taught. While telling the story of 'the tenth man' to the devotees, Sri Bhagavan Ramana concluded, "...they rejoiced at the prospect of finding their 'lost' companion, **accepted and followed the method suggested by the wayfarer."*** Let us follow the 'Wayfarer' on His Path!

The theories of creation as given to us by religions do not and cannot, on account of their contradicting illogical statements, satisfy the reasoning faculty of highly mature souls. The approach to the creation of the universe in this book, how the Self is Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer, is new and scientifically explained by the author according to the experience and views of Sri Bhagavan. Though it may seem to a superficial reader that in this approach the value of God is lessened, it really brings out the full glory of the Supreme. Such is the very purpose of the first chapter. A correct, repeated scrutiny to its very conclusion, over the nature of world and God will make one feel the necessity for Self-enquiry. How? The correct scrutiny will lead to the understanding that the scrutinizing mind is greater, more powerful and relatively more real than the scrutinized objects, the world and God – second and third persons. **The end of the scrutiny on second and third persons is the beginning of the scrutiny on first person! The conclusion of the scrutiny on first person is the dawning of the true "KNOWING"!**

---

* Refer to the verses 34, 35 and 36 of Ulladu Narpadhu - Anubandham.

After pointing out a new approach to the problems regarding God and creation, Sri Sadhu Om reveals an approach, also new, to the understanding of the true nature of *Bhakti* (Devotion or Love) by giving us many ideas unheard of before – *Bhakti* and *Jnana* are the Bliss and Consciousness (*Ananda* and *Chit*) aspects of Brahman – the removal of the impurities 'I' and 'mine' can be achieved through the Paths of Knowledge and Love. The word *Bhakti* is generally taken to mean the feeling of love towards God; but, what is *Bhakti?* Whether in the devotion (love) of a saint towards God or in the craving of an ant for its prey, the author sees the same true aspect of love present in all creatures and with this feeling of love as the very root, this new approach to the Supreme Love (*Para Bhakti*) is opened, **"Love is our Being; desire is our rising".**

Though it may seem that *Bhakti* is described along the tradition of Hinduism only, the feeling of love towards God as experienced by different devotees in different religions is also exposed since the feeling of love is one and the same. The classification of the different types of *Bhakti* indeed, applies to all.

The Teacher, the Man, Krishna the Beloved God and Sri Ramana the Guru do not belong to a particular creed, but are universal. According to one's fitness and one's taste each one of us may take Sri Bhagavan's teachings on *Bhakti*, in so many different ways; but what is truly *Bhakti* or Love according to Him is clearly shown in this book.

A casual reader may feel that all practices in *Bhakti Marga* (i.e., the *Bhakti* from Ist to IVth standards

of the School) are of no value when compared to the Love for the Self, the Supreme Love (*Para Bhakti*); on deeper reading one will find that throughout the chapter those practices are not condemned, their necessity is well understood and all of them are well approved according to the different levels of maturity of the aspirants. But the highest form of *Bhakti*, the Love for the Self alone is recognized to be, the real form of *Bhakti* and all of us have to agree to it without objection. The greater regard given to the Self shows how the author views and values the *Vedas* which are at first - the Teacher of the School (Ist, IInd and IIIrd (a) standards), then the Beloved God of the devotee and finally the Guru. In this way the author reminds us of the words of Sri Bhagavan pointing out the Self as the true essence of the *Vedas*,

> "Do Thou grant me that essence of the *Vedas* which shines as ONE with no other in *Vedanta*, O Arunachala!"
>
> – Akshara Manamalai - Verse 99.

The classification of *Bhakti* as given in this chapter will be of great help to us in finding out where exactly we are on the Path and in proceeding further on it, that is, **if we are impartial towards ourselves**.

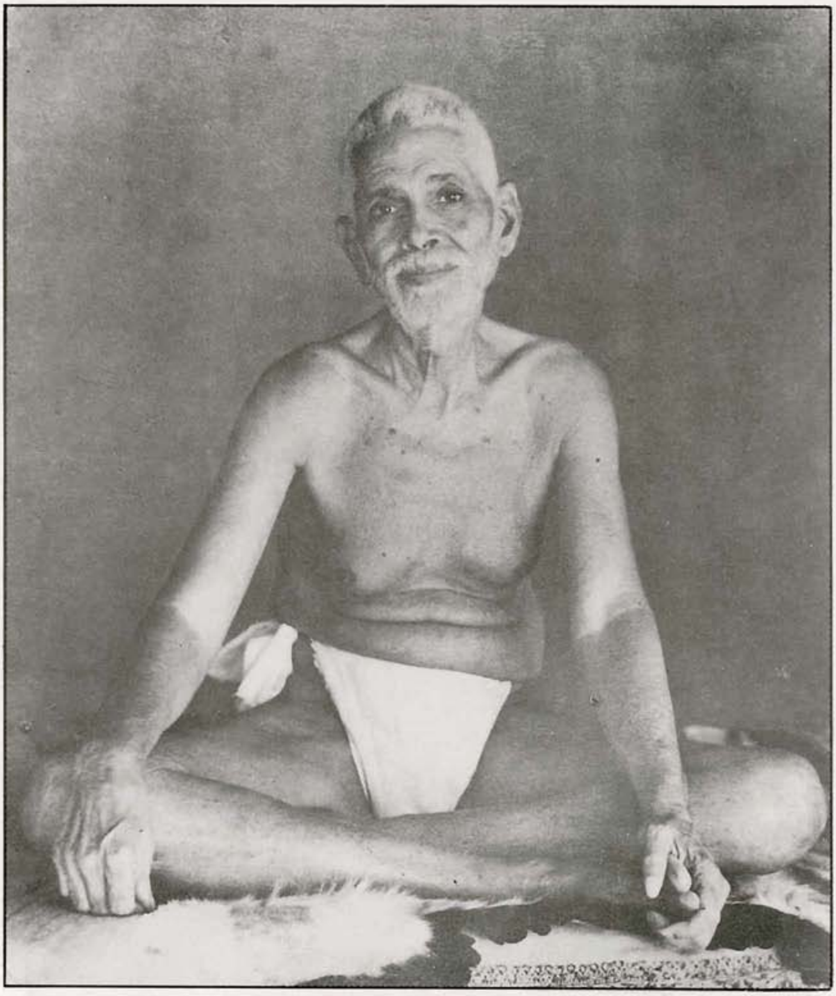
Many questions are often asked to Sri Sadhu Om about the root of *karmas* (actions), the *karta* (the doer) and *karma-phala* (the result of action). Just as in the previous two chapters, the author views the subject of *Karma* from a new angle. It is believed by many that *Prarabdha* (Destiny) leads to a dull state of fatalism, despair and escapism; but, when the correct understanding of the true nature of Destiny and

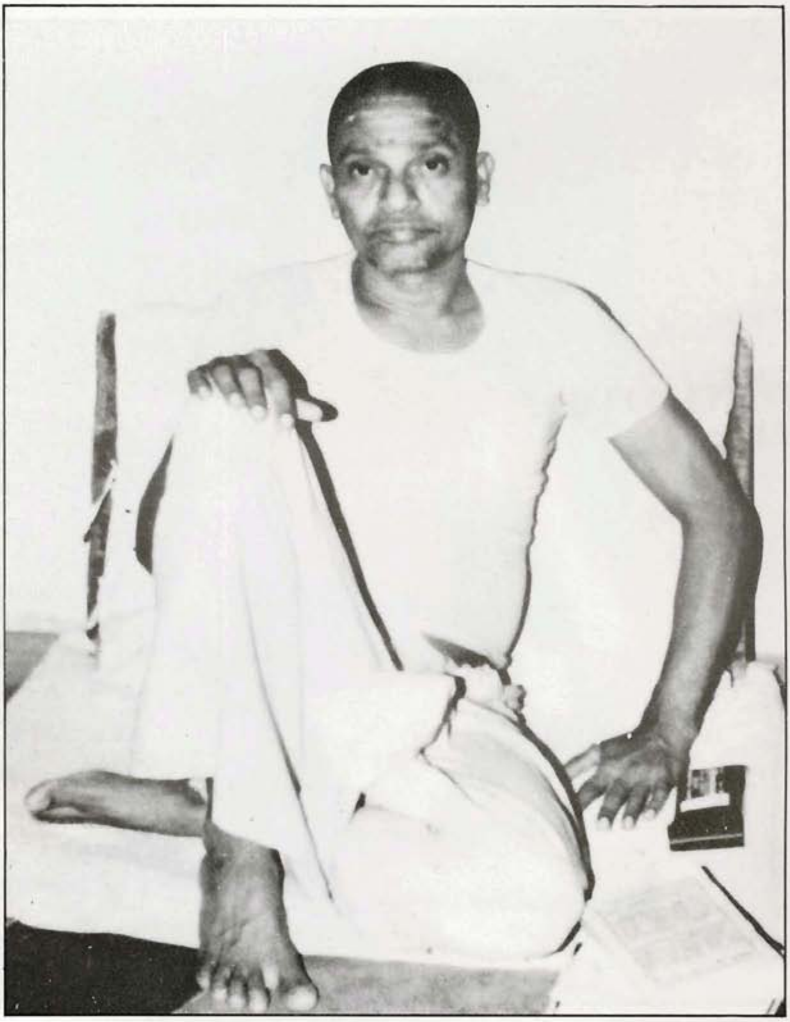
Rebirth *(Punar-Janma)* is obtained, the state of despair is changed into a state of joyful hope. The acceptation is no longer fatality but felicity. How the Perfect Freedom to will and act is misused by us in two ways and how to rectify these mistakes is well explained in this chapter. Thus we come to understand that fate and free will are not elements contradicting each other. We are finally brought to the conclusion that unconditional Self-surrender in which no room is given even to any kind of prayers, is the best *karma* (action). This is nothing but Self-abidance. Thus Sri Sadhu Om convinces us that the best *Karma* (Action), the best *Bhakti* (Devotion) and the best *Jnana* (Knowledge) is nothing but abiding in the Self, Our True Nature, through Self-enquiry, proving the verses of Shri Bhagavan

> "This – permanently remaining absorbed into its source whence it had its rising – is *Karma* and *Bhakti*; this is Yoga and *Jnana.*"
>
> – Upadesha Undiyar -Verse 10.

> "The enquiry to whom is action *(karma)*, non-devotion, disunion and ignorance is itself *Karma, Bhakti, Yoga* and *Jnana*... The abidance as the Self is verily the truth".
>
> – Ulladu Narpadhu - Anubandham - Verse 14.

It may prove very useful to the reader to ponder over this 'Note' after completing the reading of the three chapters of the book.





Sri Sadhu Om

CHAPTER 1

The World and God

The blissful silent real principle (Self or *Brahman*) alone is the true arena or base for *Maya* -who is the great power of consciousness (*maha-chit-sakti*), which is not other than the real perfect principle - to play her deceptive game for ever, having the three principles (the world, soul and God) as her playthings.

What a wonder it is!

– Guru Vachaka Kovai verse 1215

The world, soul and God are the three playthings handled by *Maya* in her wonderful game of delusion. Without these three playthings, which are called the three principles or *tripadartha*, the divine game or *lila* cannot continue. Every religion which has come into existence on earth is based upon these three principles.

Every religion first postulated three principles, the world, God and soul...

– Ulladu Narpadu verse 2

Some people object, "In some religions such as *Buddhism* no mention is made about God". But that is not the case. Just as other religions say, 'There is a third entity called God who is worthy to be glorified, loved

and attained by man'; do not religions like Buddhism also point out a goal to mankind by saying, 'There is a blissful state called *Parinirvana* which man should attain by renouncing the world, which is full of misery'? Since that goal called *Parinirvana* is what is referred to in other religions by the name 'God', we should understand that every religion including Buddhism is based upon the three entities, the world, soul and God, and thus comes within the orbit of the gracious divine game which is for a good purpose played by *Maya*. So long as a man experiences himself and the world as two separate entities, each having a distinct individual existence, he cannot in practice conceive even the mind transcending state of *Parinirvana* to be anything but a third which is distinct from himself and the world.

Among these three entities, what is called the soul or *jiva* is 'we', the first person. This world which we perceive in front of us through the five senses is a second person object, while God and these objects of the world which we do not now directly perceive through the senses are third person objects.*

Concerning which one of these three entities, the soul, world and God, and to which one of these three entities do problems arise? The world, which now appears in front of us as something insentient, is an

* Translator's note : The Tamil word for second person is *munnilai*, which etymologically means 'that which stands in front', so whenever the term 'second person' is used, in Sri Bhagavan's teachings it denotes those objects which are directly perceived in front of us through the five senses, while the term 'third person' denotes those objects which are not now perceived in front of us but which are thought of by the mind.

object known by us. No problems arise for it concerning either the soul or God, and hence it does not have to grieve over its inability to solve those problems. If we then consider God, "Where is He? What is His nature? Does He have any problems concerning the world and soul? If any such problems exist for Him, are they the first and most important thing for us to attend to?" We will have to conclude that for Him also there cannot be any problems. Thus it is clear that no problems of any kind exist either for the world or for God. Therefore it is only for us, the soul, the knowing subject, that countless problems arise concerning the world and God. Why?

We see the world; yet, though we make as much research about it as we are able to, the facts about it are found to be so unlimited that they cannot all be grasped within the narrow range of our intellects. Similar is the case with God. Our religions have given us endless descriptions about God. However, since the ordinary human intellect is unable to perceive the truth behind any of these descriptions, innumerable questions and doubts about God are always arising in us. Thus problems about the world and God arise in great abundance only to us, the soul. Therefore it would be appropriate for us first of all to take only to the enquiry 'Who am I, the soul?' In order to avoid creating more confusions by saying anything about the world and God, which are second and third persons, in the first part of this book only the first person 'I' was taken as the subject of our research.*

---

* After reading the first edition of this book, which at that time consisted only of the first part, some friends asked, "Why does

Lord Buddha declined to say anything about God in reply to those who asked about Him. But, knowing that it would serve no useful purpose to say anything not only about God but even about the world and its nature, in reply to people who asked about them Sri Bhagavan used to repeatedly insist, "Let us see about God and the world afterwards; first know yourself". 'The world is real', 'No, it is an unreal appearance'; 'The world is sentient', 'It is not'; 'The world is happiness', 'It is not'; – what is the use of arguing thus in vain? Having given up (attending to) the world, having known oneself, and both one and two (thoughts about non-duality and duality) having come to an end - that state in which 'I' (the ego) has ceased to exist is agreeable to all.

– Ulladu Narpadu verse 3

Thus Sri Bhagavan teaches that the first and foremost need for us is to know ourself, the first person.

From the stone-age to the modern space-age, man, who is filled with so many questions and doubts, has been using his intellect to make research only upon second and third person objects. Man's, questions and doubts are only about the world and God. Why? Because no man ever raises any questions or doubts about himself, that is, about his knowledge

---

(Foot note continued from page 3)

The Path of Sri Ramana end without saying anything about the world, its creation, God, the greatness of attaining His state, devotion to Him and so on?" Such friends may take what is said here as the answer to their questions.

(*chit*) of his own existence (*sat*), "Do I exist or not?" Since all doubts rise only about the knowledge which man has of the existence of the world and God, all this time he has been eagerly making research only about these other two entities and not about himself.

What benefits has mankind derived from the progress in knowledge which it has made by dividing itself into two large sections and by making research in the above said two broad directions? The human intellect which started to make research on the world has now discovered a wonderful material science which can split even atoms, the fundamental particles of which this world is said to be composed off. The discoveries made by scientific research are innumerable. But when we consider the unlimited number of objects in the world such as the planets and stars in space which still remain unknown to us, it is clear that there can be no end to scientific research and that the human intellect can never see the other shore of the vast ocean of scientific knowledge. By discovering innumerable powers hidden in the nature such as the power of magnetism, fire, water, steam, wind, petrol, electricity and atomic energy, and by inventing all kinds of contrivances, machines and weapons to make use of these powers, scientific research has resulted in terrible great wars which have made the whole world tremble and which have caused destruction and bloodshed on the hitherto unprecedented scale.

And what about the research made in the other one of the above said two directions? The human intellect which started to make research on God has produced many religions. Each one of these religions

has framed and espoused many different beliefs and dogmas of its own, they have divided the people amongst themselves into many different sects, and they have tried to propagate and make all people follow their own dogmas. Since ignorant people are unable to comprehend the common truth which underlies all religions, they become victims to religious fanatism and, due to their attachment to their own religion, they condemn all other religions, they try to convert people of other religions to their own religion, they even stoop to the level of becoming entangled in religious wars, and thus, with the help of the weapons invented by science, they also result in human bloodshed. The history of the world itself bears testimony to this fact.

Should we not try at least now to put an end to all the evils and miseries which have befallen mankind as a result of our "rising" and using our intellects to make research upon the world and God, which are second and third person objects?

Do we not know about the existence of three persons, the first person, second person and third person? But have we made research on all these three persons and have we tried to find out what the nature of each one of them is? No, we have so far made research only upon the second and third persons, and we have failed up till now to scrutinize or make research upon the first person. How? See the way in which we make use of our power of attention when we wake up from sleep. As soon as we wake up, the first thing we know is our body, and then we notice the place where we are lying, the objects which

surround us, the outside world and so on. Knowing all these things is only a second person attention. Thus when we wake up, our power of attention springs out only towards second and third person objects. Then, until we fall asleep again, our power of attention continues to dwell only upon the second and third persons by clinging to and experiencing the objects known through the five senses. At night, as soon as sleep overpowers us, our attention towards second and third persons ceases. What exactly happens to the power of attention in sleep is not correctly known to anyone except to those who have attained Self-Knowledge. In this manner, from the moment of waking up till the moment of going to sleep, from birth till death, from creation till dissolution, all people - indeed all living beings - direct their power of attention only towards second and third person objects, and no one ever directs it towards the first person! **This great error is what is called the 'original sin'.**

There are some people who ask, "How can it be said that no one ever directs their attention towards the first person? Both in the East and in the West so many people have on so many occasions pondered over the nature of the mind, and as a result they have written innumerable books on psychology. Is this not research upon the first person?"

If any researcher, whoever he may be, had directed his power of attention towards the correct first person, he would certainly have attained Self-Knowledge. All the ancient Sages of India realised the truth in the end only by knowing the real nature of

this first person. Even in the West there have occasionally been people here and there who have attained Self-Knowledge in the same way. Therefore, if any of the people who have written heaps of books on psychology have not after all their research come to the same conclusion as that which is proclaimed by Vedanta, namely that 'I' alone is the absolute truth, and if they have not thereby attained the true experience of Self, we will have to conclude that their research was not a scrutiny of the correct first person. All that they have done was to attend to a second person object called 'mind'.

As we saw earlier in this book, the word 'mind' is generally taken to be a collective name for the whole multitude of thoughts, although in actual fact the only fundamental and essential characteristic of the mind is the root thought 'I', the first person singular feeling. Thus the word 'mind' may be said to have two meanings. Its primary meaning is the subjective aspect of the mind, namely the first person thought 'I', while its secondary meaning is the objective aspect of the mind, namely the multitude of other thoughts, all of which exist only by depending upon this first thought 'I'. This multitude of thoughts is only a crowd of second person objects.

All that psychologists have made research upon is this objective aspect of the mind, and they have never made research upon its subjective aspect, the first person thought 'I'. Since all the thoughts which form the objective aspect the mind are only second persons, any research made upon them cannot be a scrutiny of the first person. It is only a research

made upon an object (*drisya*) which is known by us as other than 'I', the knowing subject (*drik*). Books on psychology, parapsychology and other such sciences which relate to the nature of the mind are merely the outcome of the research which has been made upon the mysteries of this second person mind, because such sciences are concerned only with investigating and knowing the mind as an object - that is, they merely seek to know what are the various ways in which the mind can function, what are all the secret powers which lie hidden within the mind, what are the means by which such wonderful powers may be roused and developed so that they can be used as supernatural attainments (*siddhis*) in order to achieve one's own selfish ends, and so on and forth. Thus even sciences like psychology turn out to be only a research made upon a second person object. Just as other scientists make research upon gross second and third person objects such as atoms, psychologists make research upon a subtle second person object called mind. And just as the results which have been achieved through other branches of scientific research are only a mixture of good and evil, so the results which have been achieved through psychological research are also only a mixture of good and evil. Therefore, since psychological research has not resulted in the blissful peace of Self-Knowledge, which transcends all such dualities as good and evil, it is clear that such research is not an attention to the correct first person object. **Turning one's attention towards oneself in order to find out 'Who am I, who knows the mind?' alone is the correct first person**

attention. Anyone who attends to himself in this manner, whoever he may be, will certainly attain the true Knowledge of Self.

This is a rule to which there can be no exception. Bhagavan Sri Ramana was born on earth in modern times in order to reveal that the practice of Self-attention, which is the correct research upon the first person, is the only path which will unfailingly bestow peace, tranquillity and happiness upon man, who has up till now been wasting the immense and precious power of his mind in making research upon second and third person objects, which has resulted in so much war, bloodshed and destruction. Like an expert mechanic who can locate and rectify the exact cause of malfunctioning in a machine, Sri Bhagavan was immediately able to detect where and how the research made by the human mind had gone wrong, and to discover the means by which it could be set right. Since He clearly knows each and every aspect of the extremely subtle nature of the mind's functioning, He is the all-knowing *Loka Maha Guru* or universal Teacher who can save mankind by showing the one goal which is worthy to be aimed at. Thus the principle teaching which He has given to the whole world is only the practice of Self-attention, which is the easy and direct path and which is so rational that is can be accepted and followed by all people.

Bhagavan Sri Ramana does not decry or condemn the good which mankind has derived either from science or from religion. But at the same time He Himself does not belong to any particular religion or school of thought. Nor did He ever have any liking to

found or propagate a religion in His own name. Religions (*matas*) exist only within the limitations of the mind (*mati*), whereas the goal shown by Sri Bhagavan is only Self, the reality which transcends and shines beyond the limitation of the mind.

> Religion *(mata)* will exist only so long as the mind *(mati)* exists. In the abudantly peaceful great Silence in which that mind has merged in the heart by turning within scrutinizing itself (enquiring 'who am I, this mind?'), no such religion can stand.
>
> – Guru Vachaka Kovai verse 993

Therefore the path of Sri Ramana is not a religion. Even to call it a religion of non-duality (*advaita mata*) is wrong, because duailty and non-duality are considered to be two religions, they are merely a dyad or pair of opposites, each of which has an existence only because of the other. That is, the word 'non-duality' has a meaning only in relation to the word 'duality', and thus both of them are of the same degree of reality. The revelation or darsanam of Sri Ramana is only the absolute truth (*paramarthika-satya*) in which the path and the goal are found to be both one and the same.

> Since the eternal Self is non-dual and since there is no other path (to attain it) except (to attend to and thereby to abide as) Self, the goal to be attained is only Self and the path is only Self. Know them (the goal and the path) to be non-different.
>
> – Guru Vachaka Kovai verse 579

Sri Bhagavan has shown us that it is only because man has not yet attained a correct knowledge of the first person, that it has been impossible for him to have a correct knowledge about the truth of the second and third person objects, the world and God, and that it is only because man has not yet attained a true knowledge about the second and third person objects–that is, only because man continues to have the wrong knowledge that the second and third persons are different from the truth of the first person –, that so much unnecessary confusion and strife prevails among the people of the world and that as a consequence so many misfortunes and calamities have befallen mankind. Being the perfect spiritual doctor that He is, Sri Bhagavan has thus clearly and precisely diagnosed the exact nature of the dangerous disease which exists in the mind of mankind. Moreover, He has also prescribed an entirely new method of treatment–namely taking the medicine of Self-attention and observing the diet–restriction of completely abstaining from attending to second and third person objects–and thereby He has provided us with the perfect remedy which will surely remove the primal disease of mankind, the disease known as 'original sin'. If we scrutinize this method of treatment more deeply, we will understand that the medicine is devotion (*bhakti*) and the diet-restriction is desirelessness (*vairagya*). Sri Bhagavan has also clearly explained that the correct way of taking the medicine of Self-enquiry is to attend to oneself in order to find out 'Who am I'? and He has given us many clues to facilitate this practice. All of these things He has taught us, from His own

experience of Self-Knowledge, which dawned in Him all of a sudden without His having studied any books and without His having had any other person as a Guru to teach Him. Hence the sole purpose of this exposition of Sri Bhagavan's teachings is to enable mankind to know the correct target towards which it should aim the arrow of its attention and to enable it thereby to direct its research towards the proper goal.

At this point some people ask, "Is it then completely unnecessary for us to know anything at all about the world and God? Is it useless for us even to try to know about them?" No; it is not useless. If an aspirant correctly discriminates and understands about the world and God, it will be very beneficial to him. But if one does not make research about them with maturity of mind and with proper discrimination, the outcome of one's research will be very dangerous. It was only in order to safeguard us against the adverse result which most people usually derive from such research, that Sri Bhagavan often used to declare that we should give up the research upon the world and God and should first try to know ourselves. If however we make research about the world and God with proper discrimination, the knowledge which we will obtain from such research will make us clearly understand the necessity of knowing Self, and it will also give us great enthusiasm and strength to attend to and to abide firmly in Self. In addition to that, it will also be of help to us by showing us that we need not altogether spurn either the efforts put forth by mankind up till now to make the research about the world and God or the results obtained from such

efforts, and by enabling us to understand how we can instead make the best use of those results for the benefit of mankind. Therefore, with only this intention in view, let us now make a little more scrutiny about the world and God. On different occasions and by different people Sri Bhagavan was asked a great variety of questions about the nature of the world, about how it came into existence, and about the nature of God who created it. Let us now see the essence of the teachings which He gave in reply to such questions.

The Sanskrit word for 'World' is *loka*, which etymologically means 'that which is seen'. In ancient times Sages gave this name to the world because they knew the truth that the world is not that which truly exists but only that which is seen. The same idea is also implied by Sri Bhagavan in the opening words of the first verse of *Ulladu Narpadu*, "Because we see the world, accepting (the existence of) one principle which has a manifold power is indispensable". In Tamil the first word of this sentence is 'we', which denotes the soul or *jiva*, the first of the three entities, the soul, world and God. From the words 'because we see the world', we should understand that the world, the second of the three entities, is a mere appearance which is seen. In the words 'one principle which has manifold power', the word 'one principle' denotes *Brahman*, the absolute reality which is the source and base from which the three entities rise and into which they subside and which itself shines transcending those three entities. It is only after the first person feeling 'I am a man' has risen from sleep, that the world which is seen in front of us appears. The mind

or man who sees this world then feels impelled to infer and accept the existence of an almighty God who is able to create this world, which is seen to be so vast and multivarious. That is, in the waking state, after the rising of the first person feeling 'I am so-and-so', which did not exist in sleep, everyone has to accept the existence of the other two entities, the world and God, which are second and third persons. The world and God are non-existent only when this first person feeling 'I am a man' is non-existent, that is, in sleep and in the truly awakened state of Self.-knowledge. At such times no necessity arises to accept the world and God. This is a fact which we can clearly understand from the following teachings of Sri Bhagavan:

> ...After an 'I' rises, everything rises...
>
> - Ulladu Narpadu verse 23

> If the ego comes into existence, everything will come into existence. If the ego does not exist, everything will not exist. The ego itself is everything.
>
> - Ulladu Narpadu verse 26

> If the thought 'I' does not exist, no other things will exist....
>
> – Sri Arunachala Ashtakam verse 7

How does this world come into existence, how does it continue to exist, and how does it disappear? Since the human mind likes to infer the existence of a cause for very effect, a source for every appearance and a doer for every action, when it sees such a vast and wonderful universe it cannot remain without

liking to infer the existence of a God who performs the actions of creation, sustenance and destruction, and without wanting to know about Him. The *Vedas* therefore have to accept this attitude which exists in the minds of most people and to guide them accordingly. Hence the *Vedas* have given extremely elaborate descriptions about the process of gradual creation, (*krama–srishti*) that is, about how this world and all the living beings in it have gradually come into existence from God. On one occasion when some devotees asked Sri Bhagavan, "Why is it that in different portions of the *Vedas* the process of creation is described in so many different ways, each one of which contradicts the others?" He replied:

> If creation were real, the *Vedas* would have described the process of creation in only one way. Since they have however described the process in so many different and contradictory ways, is it not clear that creation is unreal? The true aim of the *Vedas* is not to give a correct description about the process of creation. Their true, ultimate and inner aim is only to make us understand that the ever-non-existent world is unreal and that the ever-existing Self or *Brahman* is the sole reality.

The same idea is also expressed by Sri Bhagavan in verse, 102 of *Guru Vachaka Kovai* :

> The intention of the *sastras* in describing the mode or creation in many (different and contradictory) ways is only this: the inner intention of the *sastras* is not to establish the mode of creation; (to induce spiritual aspirants) to make research upon the,

reality, which is the source or root (of this world appearance), is alone the intention of those texts.

In the question-and-answer version of *Vichara Sangraham* it is recorded that in answer to the tenth question, "If the entire universe is only the form (*swarupa*) of the mind, does it not follow that the universe is unreal? If such is the case, why is the creation of the universe mentioned in the *Vedas*?" Sri Bhagavan explained as follows:

> There is no doubt whatsoever that the universe is entirely unreal. The principal purpose of the *Vedas* is only to make known the real Brahman, having shown the unreal world to be unreal. It is only for this and for no other reason that the *Vedas* admit the creation of the world. Moreover, for people of dull understanding (*manda-adhikaris*) they say that by a process of gradual creation (*kramasrishti*) the primal cause (*prakriti*), the cosmic intellect (*mahat-tattva*), the subtle elements (*tanmatras*), the gross elements (*bhutas*), the world, the body and so on gradually come into existence from Brahman, while for people of keen understanding (*tivra-adhikaris*) they say that by the process of simultaneous creation (*yugapatsrishti*) this world came into existence like a dream on account of one's own thoughts, which rise due to the defect of one's not knowing oneself, who is Self (*Atman*). Thus from the fact that they describe the creation of the world in many different ways, it is evident that the purpose of the *Vedas* is only to make *Brahman* known, having established somehow or other that the universe is unreal. In the state of

realisation, whose form is the experience of the bliss of Self; everyone can directly know the fact that the world is unreal.

Sri Bhagavan used to explain on many occasions that the *Vedas* and other scriptures teach so many different theories of creation in order to suit the different levels of maturity and understanding of the people, and that all these countless theories of creation can be classified into three distinct categories, namely (1) *srishti-drishti vada* or the theory that the creation (*srishti*) of this world occurs prior to and independent of our seeing (*drishti*) of it, (2) *drishti-srishti vada* or the theory that our seeing (*drishti*) is the cause of the creation (*srishti*) of this world and (3) *ajata vada* or the theory that neither creation (*srishti*) nor seeing (*drishti*) has ever happened at all.

Knowing that the minds of immature people cannot be satisfied unless they are taught a process of creation as the cause of the appearance of this world, the *Vedas* at first have to teach various different theories of gradual creation (*krama-srishti*). All the various processes of gradual creation described in the *Vedas* and in the scriptures of other religions, belong only to the category of *srishti-drishti-vada*. Indeed, almost all the religions and scientific theories of creation and cosmology, belong only to this broad first category, because they all accept that the world exists prior to and independant of our seeing it.

For the sake of keener and more mature minds, the *Vedas* teach the theory of simultaneous creation (*yugapath-srishti*), which is also known as *drishti-srishti*

vada, according to which the seeing of the world and the creation of it occur simultaneously. In order to explain how this simultaneous creation takes place, the Vedas say that just like the appearance of a snake in a rope, like the appearance of water in a mirage, or like the appearance of the blue colour in the sky, the appearance of this world of names and forms is due only to the defective outlook or *dosha-drishti* of the one who sees it. Thus the theory of simultaneous creation or *drishti-srishti vada* is also called the theory of false appearance (*vivarta-vada*), because it teaches that the creation of this world is nothing but a false appearance which seemingly occurs only on account of our defective outlook. Further, when explaining to still more mature minds how simultaneous creation takes place, the *Vedas* say that the appearance of this world arises only because we have forgotten Self on account of non-enquiry (*avichara*) or inattentiveness (*pramada*)* Thus, while teaching the theory of simultaneous creation, the *Vedas* accept the existence of the world at least as a false appearance.

But for the most advanced and mature aspirants who possess perfect courage and clarity of intellect, the *Vedas* teach only the final truth known as 'no creation' (*ajata*), the import of which is as follows: "No such thing as the world has ever come into existence; what you see is not the world; it is only you, the real Self. Other than you, nothing has ever existed. There never was any such thing as creation, sustenance or destruction. You alone exist". That is, while teaching

* The reader may here refer to Guru Vachaka Kovai, verse 40 and 156, and to Kaivalya Navanitham, section 2, verse 95.

the truth of *ajata*, the *Vedas* do not at all accept the existence of the world even as a false appearance. The reason why they finally have to deny the existence of the world so entirely is that the world could exist as a false appearance only if there were a mind to see it, and in actual truth there is no such thing as mind at all.

> When one scrutinizes the form of the mind without forgetfulness, (it will be found that) there is no such thing as mind...
>
> – Upadesa Undiyar verse 17.

When the mind is thus found to be ever non - existent, the world-appearance seen by it will also be found to be non-existent. Hence *ajata* alone is the absolute truth (*paramarthika satya*).

Although the Lord, Guru Ramana, expressed many doctrines according to (the beliefs and maturity of) each of those people (who came and asked Him questions), know that what we heard Him declare to be His own real experience is the doctrine of no creation (*ajata-siddhanta*).

– Guru Vachaka Kovai verse 100.

However, although the absolute truth experienced by Him was only *ajata,* when Sri Bhagavan was asked to give teachings, for the sake of devotees He accepted as if true the theory of simultaneous creation – the doctrine of false appearance – and gave His teachings accordingly. The reason why He did not give His teachings according to the standpoint of *ajata* is that in the state of *ajata* there exists only Self, the mere existence –

consciousness **'I am'**, and no other thing, no world, no mind, no bondage, no disciple and no Guru–, and hence in that state no teaching is either necessary or possible.

A need arises for a teaching only because we see the world – because we experience otherness, and therefore a teaching will be of practical value only if it accepts the existence of the world at least as a false appearance –.

That is why Sri Bhagavan begins the first verse of *Ulladu Narpadu* with the words, *"Nam ulaham kandalal"*, which means, 'because we see the world'.

> Since He has carefully said, *"Nam ulaham..."* (we should understand that) Guru Ramana, who teaches what is most helpful for the souls, has set aside, other doctrines and has taught as true only the beneficial doctrine of false appearance (*vivarta-siddhanta*, that is, the theory of simultaneous creation or *drishti-srishti vada*).
>
> – Guru Vachaka Kovai verse 83.

In the process of simultaneous creation, how does this world appear to come into existence? Whenever Sri Bhagavan was asked this question, He used to explain the process of creation by giving the example of a cinema projector, and on one occasion He said, "When Adi Sankara wanted to explain this process of simultaneous creation, He gave the example of a city which is seen reflected, in a mirror". '*Visvam* darpana drisyamana nagari...' (the opening words of *Dakshinamurti Stotram*). In his time no better example than that was available. But if he were living nowdays,

he would certainly have given the very apt example of a cinema projector. Let us therefore see how Sri Bhagavan used to explain the creation of the world with the example of a cinema projector.*

In a cinema projector there is a bright arc-lamp, in front of which passes a film, and in front of that there is a lens. The rays of the light which comes from the arc-lamp pass through the film, are enlarged by the lens and create a large picture on the distant screen. The arc-lamp in the projector is similar to Self, which shines within our body.**

The film which is close to the arc-lamp is similar to the very subtle tendencies or *vasanas* accumulated within us. The lenses by which these tendencies are enlarged and made gross are the five sense organs.

When the tendencies, which are thoughts in their very subtle seed-form, are projected out through the

---

* The reader may have to refer to appendix 4-A of this book, which is an explanatory note upon verse 6 of *Sri Arunachala Ashtakam*, in which Sri Bhagavan has used the example of a cinema projector in order to teach how the world-appearance seemingly comes into existence, and also to Sri Bhagavan's answer to question 13 of the second chapter of *Upadesa Manjari*, where He has elaborated upon the same example. When we here use the term 'body' it should not be taken to mean only the gross body, because according to Sri Bhagavan the term 'body' may denote any one of the five sheaths or pancha kosas.

** "The body is a form (composed) of five sheaths. Therefore all the five sheaths are included in the term 'body'. Without the body, does the world exist? Say, is there anyone who, having given up the body, has seen the world?" says Sri Bhagavan in verse 5 of *Ulladu Narpadu*. Thefore whenever we identify any one of the five sheaths as 'I' we shall certainly see the world corresponding to that sheaths.

five senses by the light of Self, they are made gross and are seen as the picture of this outside world consisting of so many different names and forms, which are merely the five sense-knowledges. That is, the multitude of very subtle tendencies which exist within us is seen by us as the vast universe outside. Therefore everything which is seen outside is in truth only what was already existing inside.

> Know clearly that everything which is perceived having come (out) through the mind (and the five senses), was already existing as tendencies (*vasanas*) in the heart, like a hidden treasure, and (therefore merely) an old story which has come out to be seen.
>
> – Guru Vachaka Kovai verse 84.

If there were no arc-lamp in the cinema projector, the picture show could not appear on the screen. **Similarly, if the light of self were not present, the creation, sustenance of this world could not take place. The light of Self is that which is commonly known by the name 'God',** and without its presence the acts of creation and sustenance could not take place. For the sake of people who lack sufficient maturity of understanding, this truth is expressed metaphorically in the theory of gradual creation by saying that it is God who creates and sustains this world. When the film-reel of the tendencies is made to rotate by the power of *prarabdha**, the individual sees

* *Prarabdha* is that portion of the fruits of one's past actions or karmas which has been ordained by God to be experienced by one in this lifetime. For a more detailed explanation about *prarabdha*, the reader may refer to the third chapter of this book.

a world corresponding to those tendencies and, having identified a body as 'I', experiences a seeming life for himself in that world. **If the film-reel were not in the projector, the picture-show consisting of names and forms would not appear on the screen.** Instead only a bright light would be seen there. Similarly, what shines in the outlook of the *Jnani*, in whom all the tendencies have been destroyed, is not this world-picture consisting of names and forms; what the *Jnani* experiences is only Himself, the unlimited light of Self-consciousness. That is why Sri Adi Sankara says in verse 116 of *Aparokshanubhuti*:

Drishtim jnanamayin kritva pasyet brahmamayamjagat which means, "Making one's outlook of the nature of knowledge (*jnanamaya*), one should see the world as *Brahman*". The same truth is also expressed by Sri Bhagavan in verse 52 and 54 of *Guru Vachaka Kovai* :

> Having transformed one's outlook as of the nature of knowledge (*jnanamaya*), if one sees through that outlook, which is of the nature of real knowledge, the world (consisting) of the five elements beginning with space will be (seen as) real, being (found to be nothing but) the supreme reality, which is of the nature of knowledge. See thus.

Since that sight (which is seen) cannot be otherwise than the eye which sees, know for certain that to the knower of reality (*mey-jnani*) who due to the cessation of (all mental) activities, sees with the outlook which has became existence-consciousness-bliss (*sat-chit-ananda*); this world is that (existence-consciousness–bliss) alone.

When we, the real Self, who shine devoid of the limitations of time and space, seemingly confine ourself within all kinds of limitations by imagining ourself to be an individual soul, whose form is the imperfect and limited feeling 'I am only this small body', the remaining portion of our unlimited existence-consciousness which is not confined within the limitation of that body appears to our individual consciousness as this immeasurable universe, which is felt to be other than us, and as God, the all–powerful Lord of this universe.

> If oneself is a form (the body), the world and God will be likewise (that is, they will also be forms); if oneself is not a form, who can see their forms, and how? Can the sight (that which is seen) be otherwise than the eye (the seer) ?...
>
> – Ulladu Narpadu verse 4

> On account of the ego, the feeling 'I am the body', experiencing all the worlds, which are not other than consciousness, as if they were different from oneself, who is that consciousness, is a creation of the dense and expansive delusion (of *ajnana* or ignorance of one's true nature).
>
> – Guru Vachaka Kovai verse 67.

If we, the unlimited and undivided Self-consciousness, who are unbound by name and form or time and space, and who are untainted by any changes such as birth and death, feel ourself to be a person who is born, who has the name and form of a human body, who exists only within the limitation of a particular time and a particular place, and who will

one day die and disappear, then the unlimited remaining portion of our own real Self will appear in front of us as this boundless universe, which contains innumerable planets and stars, all of which are bound by names and forms and by time and space, the limits of which cannot be discovered in spite of any amount of scientific research. Therefore this whole universe is in truth nothing other than us. Similar is the case with God, the all-powerful Supreme Lord who creates and sustains this vast universe. Since He is also nothing but the unconfined remaining portion of our own real Self, which shines devoid of any limitations, even though His names, forms and other characteristics have been described in so many different ways up till now by so many religions, *rishis*, prophets and scriptures, still He shines transcending and unbound by all such descriptions.

> There is no end to my divine glories,
> O Arjuna...
>
> ... I stand supporting this entire universe
> with one portion (of myself).
>
> – Bhagavad Gita 10,40,42.

The cause of the creation of both the world and God is only our error of wrongly imagining ourself to be confined within the limits of the body, and this error arises only because of our slackness in Self-attention, that is, only because of our *pramada* or forgetfulness of Self. What then is the truth of the statement made in the scriptures that the three functions of creation, sustenance and destruction are the divine play or lila of God? The true significance of

this statement is that these three functions are only our own divine play of using our unlimited perfect freedom *paripurna-brahma-swatantra** to create and to sustain the wrong outlook by Self-abidance, that is, by Self-attention or *atma-drishti*. In absolute truth, this entire divine play is nothing other than us, the real Self. Though we are truly never confined in any way, we seemingly imagine ourself to be confined within the limits of a body, and as soon as we imagine so the world and God come into existence.

Having limited and transformed oneself into a body, and having transformed the knowledge gathered through the five senses of that body into the world, one sees that the world, which is nothing other than one's own real Self, as objects which are other than oneself, and one is thereby deluded with likes and dislikes for those objects. Such confusion alone is what is called the world-illusion (*jagat-maya*).

– Sadhanai Saram verse 44.

Since the three entities – we as an individual soul, the world and God – all come into existence simultaneously, this process is called simultaneous creation (*yugapat -srishti*). But since even the rising of the wrong outlook of seeing ourself confined as a body is clearly known to be unreal when viewed through the outlook of the all-transcending absolute reality, what will finally be experienced is only *ajata* – the truth that creation, sustenance and destruction have no reality whatsoever.

---

* For a detailed explanation about the nature of our unlimited perfect freedom (*paripurna-brahma-swatantra*), the reader may refer to the third chapter of this book.

> When one always abides unswervingly in one's own state without knowing (any differences such as) 'oneself' and 'others'... who is there other than oneself?
>
> –Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham verse 38.

> There is no becoming, no destruction, no one in bondage, no one having desire to be released, no one making effort (to attain liberation) and no one who has attained Liberation. Know that this is the absolute truth (*paramartha*).
>
> – Upadesa Tanippakkal verse 24.

If we turn our power of attention towards "our own" Self, our limited sense of individuality will cease to exist, and hence the appearances of the world and God will come to an end. We can understand this truth even from our experience in the ordinary state of sleep. When we are asleep, we do not have even the least knowledge or doubt about either the world or God. Why? Because in sleep we, the ego, the limited first person feeling 'I am this body', do not exist, and hence the other two entities, the world and God, do not exist. Thus merely by our creating ourself as a limited individual soul on account of our *pramada* or forgetfulness of Self, we simultaneously become the one who has created the other two entities, the world and God.

As soon as we rise as an individual soul, the dyads or *dvandvas* (the pairs of opposites such as good and bad, pleasure and pain, and birth and death) and the triads or *triputis* (the three factors of objective knowledge such as the seer, the act of seeing and the object seen) all seemingly come into existence. How?

When by our unlimited perfect freedom (*paripurna-brahmaswatantra*) we, the one existence-consciousness-bliss, see our nature to be as a nature to rise, our three aspects of existence, consciousness and bliss are reflected and are seen by us, the individual soul, as their opposites, namely non-existence, ignorance and misery. That is, just as when a person who is standing on the opposite bank of a pond is seen reflected in the water, the right side of his body is seen as its left side and the upper part of his body is seen below, so when our nature to be is seen as a nature to rise, our single aspect of existence (*sat*) is seen as the dyad existence and non-existence, our single aspect of consciousness (*chit*) is seen as the dyad knowledge and ignorance, and our single aspect of bliss (*ananda*) is seen as the dyad pleasure and pain. And just as when one single ray of white light from the sun passes through a prism, it is diffracted and seen as various colours, so when we imagine ourself to be a petty individual soul on account of our slackness in Self-attention, our own single and undivided Self is seemingly diffracted and experienced by us, the individual soul, as the triad consisting of the knowing mind, its act of knowing and the many objects of the world which are known by it.*

Since the dyads and triads appear only when we rise as an ego, a limited and confined individual soul, they all exist only by depending upon the ego as their support or base;** Moreover, each component of

* Refer here to verse 96 and 97 of Sadhanai Saram.

** Refer here to appendix 4C, where it is explained that the ego alone is the base of the dyads and triads.

a dyad or triad has an existence only because of each other component of that same dyad or triad. For example, if there did not previously exist an ignorance about a certain thing, what is called a knowledge about that thing could not come into existence. That is, the knowledge of a thing arises and has an existence only because of the prior existence of the ignorance of that thing. Similarly, when we come to know a certain thing, the prior existence only when the knowledge about that thing appears.

> Without ignorance (about an object), knowledge (about that object) does not exist; (similarly) without (that) knowledge, that ignorance does not exist...
>
> – Ulladu Narpadu verse 10.

In the same manner, each component of the other dyads such as good and bad, inside and outside, and pleasure and pain, and each component of the triads such as the seer, the act of seeing and the object seen, has a seeming existence only because of each other component of that dyad or triad.

The consciousness which knows objects is not our real consciousness. It is only the mind or ego. Since all the various dyads and triads can exist only in this object knowing consciousness, they belong only to the ego, the petty individual soul which we become when we confine our unlimited real nature within the limitations of a body. When we, the ego, come into existence, along with us and because of us the dyads and triads also seemingly come into existence. Thus these dyads and triads exist only by clinging to the

ego, and hence it is only to the ego that they pertain; they do not pertain to Self, nor do they cling to Self. Since Self shines clearly even in sleep, if the dyads and triads were to pertain to Self, why are they not experienced by anyone in sleep? The reason why the dyads and triads do 'not exist' in sleep is that the ego has completely subsided at that time. Thus the fact that the dyads and triads do not exist when the ego does not exist, is a truth which is experienced by everyone. Therefore if we discriminate in this way, we can clearly understand the truth that the ego alone is the base or support of the dyads and triads. In order that we should have no doubt about this truth, Sri Bhagavan has emphatically declared in verse 26 of *Ulladu Narpadu*, "If the ego comes into existence, everything (the world, God, bondage and liberation, pleasure and pain, and so on) will come into existence. If the ego does not exist, everything will not exist. (Hence) the ego itself is everything...", and in verse 7 of *Sri Arunachala Ashtakam*, "If the thought 'I' does not exist, no other thing will exist..."

If an aspirant truly engages himself in the practice of Self-attention, he will often feel as if the state of Self-consciousness, which is his own true nature, is clearly known for some time and as if it is afterwards obscured. On such occasion he will be able to understand very clearly from his own experience how the world-appearance vanishes and how it again comes into existence. Because of the speed of forgetfulness or *pramada* by which he swerve from the state of Self-attention, it may be difficult in the beginning for an aspirant to notice exactly when he

loses his hold on Self-attention. In due course, however, because of the clarity and strength which he will gain by repeatedly practicing Self-attention, it will become possible for him to notice the exact moment when Self-attention is lost, and thus it will become possible for him to regain it immediately. On all the occasions when he thus clearly cognizes the moment when Self-attention is lost and the moment when it is regained, the aspirant will be able to know very easily from his own experience how the world is created by his losing Self-attention and how it is then destroyed by his regaining Self-attention. Thus the aspirant will come to know with absolute certainty that his giving room to slackness in Self-attention is the means by which the body and world are created, that his maintaining slackness in Self-attention on account of his lack of interest either to notice that such slackness had occurred or to put an end to it, is the means by which the world is sustained, and that his firmly abiding once again in his own real and, blissful state of pure Consciousness, which is devoid of the limitations of name and form, having vigilantly known the exact moment when slackness in Self-attention occurred and having thereby put an end to it, is the means' by which the world is destroyed. When the aspirant comes to know this truth from his own direct experience, he will realise himself to be the perfect Supreme Reality which transcends the three functions of creation, sustenance and destruction, and hence he will remain unshakably established in the state of absolute peace.

A person will feel no liking to take to the practice of Self-attention until he gains the proper discrimination

whereby he can understand that the two states of creation and sustenance, which are merely a mixture of pleasure and pain, are not worthy to be cherished and pursued. So long as he continues to give importance to these two states, which are nothing but mere appearances, he will be liable to build castles in the air by imagining that he can eliminate pain from this mixture of pleasure and pain, which is one of the many dyads, and that he can thereby make pleasure alone prevail in two states of creation and sustenance. Though such a person may be very broad-minded, generous-hearted and compassionate, since he may even be deluded to the extent of believing that the miseries which we now see in the world would not have existed if, the functions of creations and sustenance had been performed in accordance with his own visionary ideas, and thus he will find fault even with God, who is now performing those functions and he will wistfully imagine that he must take responsibility for carrying out a reform in the present manner in which God is governing the world. He will then proceed to draw up wonderful plans whereby he hopes to transform this world into a blissful heaven and remove all the miseries seen in it, even hoping to make the body of man immortal.

Such a well-intentioned but deluded person will then begin to ponder how and from where he can acquire the divine power or *sakti* which is necessary in order for him to carry out this wonderful unselfish plan of his, and he will begin to devise and practice many new kinds of *yoga* in the hopes of achieving such power. Finally, however, he will have to come to the

conclusion that he can obtain such power only from God, the almighty Supreme Lord who is at present creating and sustaining this whole world, and so he will then select the method of complete self-surrender as a means of begging and acquiring such power from Him. Being confident that the unlimited power of God will surely be showered upon him if he adopts this method, and believing that with that power he can fulfil all the wonderful plans which he has drawn up, he will be waiting in eager expectation for the day when that power will descend from above.

Knowing that there were people who were actually so deluded as to imagine, like the man described above, that it was both necessary and possible for them to bring about a radical reformation in the manner in which the world had been created and was being governed by God, Sri Bhagavan composed the following two verses :

> The buffonery of the madmen who, not knowing the manner in which they function by *sakti* (that is, not knowing the truth that it is only by the *atma-sakti* or power of Self that they are enabled to function and perform activities), engage in activities saying, "We shall obtain all occult powers (*siddhis*)", is like the story of the cripple who said, "If someone helps me to stand, what are these enemies (that is, how powerless they will be in front of me)?" See, when God is bearing the burden of the world, the pseudo soul (imagining as if it were) bearing (that burden) is a mockery like the form of a *gopuram-tangi* (a sculptured figure which seems to support the top of a temple-

> tower with great strain, but which in fact is itself supported by the tower). Whose fault is it if someone who is travelling in a train, which is bearing a great burden, undergoes suffering by bearing (his small) burden on (his own) head instead of placing it on the train?
>
> – Ulladu Narpadu Anubandham verse 15 & 17

But if the man described above really takes to the path of complete self-surrender in order to acquire from God the power which is necessary for him to bring about such a radical reformation in the creation, what will actually happen in the end? If and when the surrender becomes complete, the mind or ego which had risen as 'I am so-and-so' and which had cherished all the wonderful notions mentioned above, will surely drown and perish in Self, the source from which it had risen, thereby losing its separate individuality.

Until and unless the ego is thus annihilated, the surrender cannot be said to be complete. Since a person therefore cannot remain as a separate individual entity after he has completely surrendered himself to God, upon whom is the divine power to descend, and who is to make use of that power to reform the world? Thus in the end all the hopes and ambitions cherished by this poor man will turn out to be completely meaningless and absurd, just like the patently ficticious story told in *Kaivalya Navanitam*, chapter 2, verse 89.

> The son of a barren woman and the man seen superimposed on a post, wearing wreaths of flowers imagined in the sky, haggled about the

> price of the silver in the mother-of-pearl, began to fight in the city shining in the clouds, stabbed each other with the horns of a hare, became exhausted and died, after which they both became ghosts: on hearing such a story, no wise man will be deceived.

Why should any man unnecessarily tax his brain and confuse himself by cherishing such ideas and ambitions?

When Sri Bhagavan was once asked about the beliefs of a certain philosopher who cherished the strange notions mentioned above, He briefly replied, **"Let the surrender first become complete; we can see about everything else afterwards"** Why did He reply in this way?

> Transforming this world into a heaven devoid of misery and making man immortal are not things which have to be newly done. Even now the world is truly nothing other than *Brahman*, the blissful Supreme Reality, and man is in his true nature nothing other than Self, the immortal spirit. Therefore the world and man do not now need to be made either blissful or immortal. All that we need to do is to see them as they really are. That is why Sages say, "Making one's outlook of the nature of knowledge, one should see the world as *Brahman*" (*drishtim jnanamayin kritva pasyet brahmamayam jagat*). The defects which we now see in the world and in man are not defects in God's creation but are only defects in our own outlook. Therefore there is no use in trying to rectify God's

creation by usurping His power; if we wish to rectify all the defects which we see, we must rectify our own outlook; there is no other way. Those who know the reality will declare that there is no defect in creation (*srishti*), but that there is a defect only in outlook (*drishti*).

– Sri Ramana Jnana Bodham, vol. 1, verse 1696.

Whatever has appeared is bound to disappear; whatever has been created is bound to be destroyed; whatever has been born will have to die, whatever has come will have to go; whatever has been newly known by the mind at one time will have to be forgotten by it at a later time. But that which always exists without appearing or disappearing, without being coming or going, and without becoming known or being forgotten, alone is the eternal reality; that alone is our true nature. We were never born; only our body was born.

Having come into existence, our body will one day have to lose its existence either by dying or by disappearing. We cannot make it live forever. If we so desire we may be able to develop our own wonderful innate power and thereby forcibly extend the lifetime to this insentient body for a short while. The ancient Sage Tirumular lived for three thousand years composing the three thousand verses of *Tirumantiram* at the rate of one per year. But at the end of those three thousand years, what happened to his divine body? It disappeared, did it not? Therefore no one can make the body retain its form for all eternity. Moreover, there is no need for anyone to do so. When

even great Sages who have attained true knowledge have never made the body immortal, if anyone else tries to do so, it will be a futile effort, like paving a road to a town which does not exist.

In this context some people ask, "The bodies of some Sages such as Tirugnanasambandhar and Manikkavachakar did not perish and were not left behind in this world as corpses. Does this not mean that they had made their bodies immortal?". The answer to this question is as follows: what happens to the body of an ordinary person when it is left behind as a corpse? It loses its form by being decomposed into the five elements of which it was originally composed. That is, the body is left in one of the elements, either in fire, in the earth, in water or in the open air, and that one element gradually separates the other elements in the body, thereby merging them into the surrounding elements. Thus the form of the body gradually disappears. In the case of a few people, however, instead of taking place gradually, this process of separating the elements in the body happens by the power of divine Grace in a split second. But what difference is there in the final result? None at all. Even the bodies of those Sages have lost their form and have disappeared, have they not? A difference can be seen only in the manner in which the separation of the elements in the body took place, and in the time taken for it to happen. But all the same, the forms of their bodies were not retained unperished. Since the body anyway has to lose its form and disappear, what does it matter how it loses it? Even if the body loses its form and disappears

instantaneously, as happened in the case of those Sages, it cannot be said that it has been made immortal. Since the bodies of those Sages were born and newly appeared in the world at one time, they had to die and disappear from the world at a later time.

On hearing this answer, some people raise a further objection by saying, "But there is also a belief which maintains that even though their gross bodies disappear, the Sages live eternally in their subtle bodies governing the affairs of the world. Therefore do not their bodies continue to exist at least in that subtle form? Is not that state to be considered as immortality of the body?" The answer to this is, as follows:

Is it, that it is possible only in the case of great Ones to have subtle bodies and carry on the activities of the world? Even ordinary people, after giving up their gross body, are able to take subtle bodies according to the result of their virtuous or sinful actions and carry on the activities of their respective world. God too, one of the three entities, is in the same way engaged in His activities of creation, sustenance and dissolution! Do we not also concede the fact that such a thing takes place upon the plane of duality? What is there to be wondered at? It is for this reason only that even the forms (entities) of God are said to be devoid of truth from the standpoint of the Absolute Reality. Be they gross, subtle or causal, they are after all "a body" only! So long as one identifies oneself with anyone of these three bodies as 'I', it is only ignorance. Certainly there cannot be but an end to that

body and to the ignorance – the identification with it. "WE", the Absolute Truth are not a body – not even anyone of the above three kinds. We should realize that the body is born only to die. The discrimination leading to such conclusion alone is the right discrimination.

Before the birth of their body what and how were they who, now want to prolong their body or immortalize it? Before they were born why were they not worrying about this body which they now seek to prolong and preserve? Before they were born they were without the present body; but they did not feel it as a loss. Even after the death of the present body they are, of course, going to be without the present body! As such, what loss anew will they have and why should they worry for it now? Does it not therefore stand to reason that it is the lack of the perfect knowledge of the Self, i.e., what they really are, which accounts for all their above efforts? Therefore, let all their efforts be channeled into the direction of rightly knowing the Self.

Moreover, the body itself is a disease for us who are ever deathless, blemishless and diseaseless. During the last days of His illness Sri Bhagavan Ramana once said to His devotees who were extremely worried about the condition of His body, "The body itself is a disease. If that disease gets a disease, is it not for our good?"

> "Only frivolous people with the venomous ego whose poison is the cause of all diseases of misery, perform ceaseless austerities (*tapas*) to strengthen

and lengthen the life span of the body, like one who takes medicine to prolong the disease!"

– Guru Vachaka Kovai, Verse 233.

If we realize, from what has been said above, the fact that the real cause of all the miseries that appear to us in the world is solely due to our defective outlook that has come into existence as a result of our contracting our limitless blissful Nature of existence into a limited body through the unlimited freedom inherent in us of using our Will, it will then become obvious that the only wise thing to do, is to put an end to the disease of the appearance of the world and body (through Self-attention) and be ever blissful. Therefore, the yogic efforts of mankind to immortalise the body and heavenise the world are vain and in no way better than the activities of a blind man in a dark room who is doing something without even knowing what he is doing, The root cause for all these activities such as to usurp the power of the Almighty to carry out the aforesaid ambitions, is the wrong discrimination or the ignorance through which one feels that the two entities, world and God, are different from the Self. This in turn is due to the lack of **right knowledge of the Self**, i.e., the lack of knowing Oneself to be the indivisible Whole, the Supreme Reality transcending the trinity of world, God and soul. Therefore, first and foremost, let the human effort be directed towards rightly knowing the Self before hastily, concluding anything about world and God. Then the truth of world and God will dawn of its own accord!

It is but natural for some to ask, "Should we not then be compassionate towards all beings suffering around us? Should we not then engage ourselves in the service of mankind and eradicate those miseries? Is not there a path 'Karma Yoga' well charted and followed?"

Yes, it is a very great principle to mind others welfare! But, is it not first necessary to know what is good for us, before knowing what is good for others? It is no wonder, when man does not know what he really is, that he is not able to know what is good for him. Unless he knows this, how can he understand what are others and what is good for them? Man who, through a limited outlook, believes himself to be a body, can know others also to be bodies only. The same wrong outlook makes him decide wrongly what is good for him and for others. Besides, he is at his wit's end to know correctly even what is good and what is bad. When along with the previous ignorance of not knowing what he really is and what others are, the ignorance of not knowing what is good and what is bad is added, both play havoc to lead and, end all his activities into great confusion!

What is good and what is bad! Today, through some kind of discrimination we decide as bad a thing that yesterday we decided as good. In the same way, tomorrow through some other kind of discrimination we may decide as bad a thing that today we decide as good and give it up. Our standards of good and bad often change according to the whims and fancies of our likes and dislikes. What is to be inferred from this? Only that we do not have an infallible definition

regarding good and bad which is one among so many dualities. In such a state of confusion how can we set out to do what is good to the world? What wonder is there if a man suffering from chronic constipation, during one of his philanthropic moods, gives laxative pills to one and all (including those suffering from chronic dysentery)! The philanthropic mood that takes possession of one – who sees others as oneself – will only work in this topsy-turvy fashion!!

To recapitulate what has been said above: (1) Because man does not know what he is, he cannot know what the world is. (2) Because man does not know what is good for himself, he cannot know what is good for others. (3) Because man is incapable of giving himself all help, he surely is incapable of helping the world. It is a matter of common knowledge that, on account of these three reasons only, all those who came forward as reformers, under the "mistaken" notion of doing good, are but to be those who have brought forth so many wrongs and evils to the world. Why to talk about these poor reformers! How can any of them hope to do any permanent good to the world, when God Himself accepts the fact that He cannot reform the world once for all. Let us turn to the words of Lord Krishna who performed so many great miracles from the very moment of His birth,

> " ...For establishing righteousness I incarnate myself from age (*yuga*) to age (*yuga*)"
>
> – verse 8 of Chap. IV. Bhagavad Gita

From His own saying we are made to understand that He has to come again and again. Had his reform

been permanent, there would have been no need for Him to come again and again! What can we infer from this? That it does not show the inability of the Almighty, but that it only betrays the unreal nature of the world!! This very fact was pointed out by Bhagavan Sri Ramana. Therefore, in the name of reform let not man's ego rise and spoil himself as well as the world. First, let us control these kinds of emotions and make the mind calm.

We have seen in "*The Path of Sri Ramana, Part I*", page 44, foot note, how on account of our ignorance of what is Self, the word "selfishness" is wrongly used to denote a vice. What is decided as good or bad by a Jnani who alone experiences the whole universe as His own Self, will only be the right decision, if at all we have to know what is really good and what is really bad, though, strictly speaking, in His view there is neither good nor bad as there is no world at all apart from His Self.

It is only the body which is very limited that is felt by* man as 'I'. Through such restricted feeling everything that he sees – this world and all its living beings – seems to him to be different from himself. As the body alone is felt to mean 'I', selfishness is considered to be a vice, But, for a Jnani who has the true knowledge of the Self 'I' is experienced as an all-pervading single WHOLE. So, from His view - point His selfishness is nothing but the highest altruism. When a Jnani thus feels everything as the one undivided Self, will not His body also be included in

---

* man; here denotes an individual soul.

that experience as 'I' ?* The experience of the ignorant is 'I am this body alone' while that of a Jnani is 'I am the body as well', This is explained by Sri Bhagavan Ramana in verse 17 of 'Ulladu Narpadu':-

"For those who have not realised the Self and as well for those who have realised the Self, this body is 'I'; but, for those who have not realised the Self, the 'I' is confined only to the limit of the body; and for those who have realised the Self within the body (i.e., in this very life time), the 'I' shines as the limitless Self. Know that this is the only difference between these two."

In the same manner, as the whole universe is experienced by the Jnani as not apart from Self – Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda) – it is not wrong for the Jnani to feel that the world is real; but, it is certainly wrong if an ignorant says, 'The world is real' so long as his experience of 'I' is limited to the body alone. It is because the ignorant takes the world – the names and forms, the unreal aspects of Brahman – to be real, that he is to be instructed, 'Brahman alone is real; the world is unreal *(Brahmam satyam; Jagat mitya)*'. But really, from the view-point of the supreme, undivided experience of a Jnani the world is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (Sat-Chit-

* Body consciousness is a limited one. It cannot stand comparison with the unlimited eternal Self-Consciousness. The body consciousness of a Jnani is nothing but the reflection of a ray of an atom-like part of that pure Self-Awareness which is experienced by Him as 'I'. Only in this way a Jnani is aware of His bodily existence.

- "Maharshi's Gospel", Chapter IV

Ananda), the Brahman. This is explained by Sri Bhagavan Ramana in verse 18 of *'Ulladu Narpadu'*:-

"The world is real for those who have not realised the Self as well as for those who have realised. For those who have not realised, the reality is of the measure (i.e, name and form) of the world: For those who have realised, the reality shines as the nameless and formless substratum of the world. Know that this is the only difference between these two".

The Jnani's Selfishness is verily the real and right kind of "Unselfishness" glorified by the people till now. On the other hand, if other's welfare is decided with whatever amount of generosity coming through the satvic mood that may rise at times in the poor mind of the *Jeeva*, (no matter how marvelously brilliant his intellect is or how well versed he is in all the different branches of learning) whose knowledge is confined to the idea 'I am the body', it will end only in the ill-fare of the world!!

From what has been said above let not the reader, think that it is wrong to do good to others. If it is not one's own good that is aimed at, then whatever good that is done to others, is good.

Out of the many different kinds of disinterested worship (*Nishkama Pooja*) the worship of the universe as the form of God is also recommended. Viewing the universe as God and worshipping it can only be done through the imaginative process of the mind. So it will be only the worship of a mental God and not that of Reality. But, to really experience the universe as God (which is really worshipping it) is possible only, after

realising the true nature of the Self, where the world and God will not remain as entities other than the Self.

"In the heart at first you see Him
who is everywhere;
Only then that all exists as
Him you'll be aware."

- Dhyanappattu - Sadanai Saram.

But by viewing the world and the living beings in it as God, at least by mind, a great good does result namely the purification of mind. This is the hidden aim of Karma Yoga. Karma Yoga allows a man to discriminate and decide what is good for himself and what is good for others according even to his ordinary mind and allows him to act accordingly. But it is to be known that the purpose of this allowance is neither the complete eradication of the miseries of the world nor the capturing of God, the inaccessible One. Sri Bhagavan Ramana gives out the method and the result of Karma Yoga in *'Upadesha Undiyar'*, verse 3: "Acts performed without attachment to the results and dedicated to the Lord, purify the mind and point the way to Liberation". Therefore the purpose of Karma Yoga is only the purification of the mind. This purpose being the hidden aim, is enjoined in Karma Yoga.

"You have the right only to do; but never the right over the results thereof..."

– Bhagavad Gita-Chapter II-verse 47.

Here the word 'results' not only applies to the result of the activities of the aspirant *(Sadhaka)* but also to the result of the practice of Karma Yoga! The

Karma Yogi who is engaged in the service of humanity with an unselfish motive, expects as a result at least that those whom he serves will be relieved from their miseries and get happiness. He may think that he is making the sacrifice of any personal benefit when, in fact, it is he only who is really benefited, since such action purifies his mind. If the aspirant in the beginning of his practice does not get at least this expectation that the world will be relieved from its miseries by his service, he will lose all enthusiasm and faith towards Karma Yoga. If enthusiasm and faith are lost, the purification of the mind which is the aim and result of Karma Yoga will also be lost.

Both the purification of the mind and thereby its ability to discriminate rightly grow simultaneously in the aspirant. Therefore, as his mind becomes purer and purer it gets the high clarity through which his power of understanding becomes sharper and sharper. Now only, with this, he is able to understand the necessity of rightly knowing the Self, and how the appearance of the world and God is connected with Self-knowledge and also, **how purification of the mind is the sole aim of Karma Yoga,** as it has been explained so far in this chapter. Indeed, what greater benefit than this clarity of mind is worthy to be attained through Karma Yoga? For, the aspirant is now really qualified for the science of Self by which the Supreme Truth will dawn in him! It is this process that is pointed out in the verse 3 of *'Upadesha Undiyar'* by Sri Bhagavan referred to previously.

How the purification of mind is effected by the practice of Karma Yoga?

If we know what is the impurity in the mind, the way in which it is removed by the practice of Karma Yoga will also be clearly understood; 'I' and 'mine' are the impurities in the mind or *'Chittam'*. If these impurities which form the *'tam'* in *'Chittam'* are removed, *'Chittam'* will remain as *'Chit'* (Pure Consciousness) which it really ever IS.

> "Just like a colourless prism appears to be red when near a red flower, *Chit* (Consciousness) appears to be *chittam* – the mind, when the impurities 'I' and 'mine' are superimposed on It. When these, which are caused by *Maya*, are removed it shines as ever as *Chit*".
>
> - Guru Vachaka Kovai - Verse No. 244.

'I' and 'mine' are the root-impurities of all other innumerable impurities such as lust, anger and the like. Even out of these two, the possessive form 'mine' can have an existence only because of 'I'. Where there is no 'I', there will be no 'mine'. Though in its pure nature 'I' is the Self, it is taken to be impure because of its attributes which are alien to it and experienced as 'I' am-this, I am-this body, 'I am-a man or I am-so and so'. Hence, the attributes appended to 'I AM' alone, are the 'root-impurity'. Till this impurities are removed, Self, Existence-Consciousness (Sat-Chit) is called ego. **The true purpose of Yoga is only to remove this root-impurity.**

The methods of removing the impurities vary according to the maturity of the aspirants. Consequently different Yogas had to be framed. To the aspirants who are very intent on removing their

impurities, the impurity in the form of 'mine' being gross rather than the impurity in the form of 'I' which is subtle, come first within the range of their perception. Then, one with sincere yearning, at once starts rejecting every thing saying, "Let it not be for me". This leads to renunciation. Another type of aspirant kindles within himself the feeling of sacrifice saying, "Let all these (of mine) be for others and not for me"*. Karma Yoga is framed having the principle of the second type of aspirant as its base!

"If wealth, fame, name, and such worldly things make for my happiness, let them all be only for the happiness of others and not for me"; with such an attitude the aspirant engages himself throughout his life in such activities in all the ways he can. Just as a dirty cloth becomes purer and purer as it is beaten and squeezed more and more** so also every unselfish activity of his, serves the purpose of dealing a blow upon his 'mine-ness' and thereby makes his mind purer and purer. If we minutely scrutinise every injunction and prohibition such as fasting, charitable deeds and other codes of conduct as enjoined by the Vedas, to be followed by people in their daily actions *(Nitya-Karma anushtana)*, it will become clear that all these aim at making one to sacrifice at least a bit of 'mine-ness' and put a check on one's craving for the worldly enjoyments.

---

* It is worthwhile to compare with the portions of *"Chamakam"* quoted in the next chapter to find out one's fitness to take to Karma Yoga.

** It is the custom in South India to clean the clothes by beating them on a stone slab and squeezing them afterwards in order to remove the dirt.

Thus out of the two impurities 'I' and 'mine', as 'mine' is easily noticeable, it is no wonder that all good people with noble aspiration generally first try to tackle only the 'mine-ness'. For, such a mind which is thus purified through the renunciation of 'mine-ness' another truth also will dawn :- "This 'mine' is just like the leaves and branches of a tree. No matter with what effort and how many times they are cut, the leaves and branches -'mine-ness' – will, under favourable conditions, keep on sprouting again and again in some form or other in their own time. Therefore, the root 'I' should be traced out and annihilated". Even for this truth to dawn, is it not necessary that the restless intensity of 'mine-ness' should be lessened to a very great extent? Until this understanding comes to an earnest seeker through the proper discrimination of the purified mind that 'I' is the right root-impurity and that it has to be rooted out, service to humanity, sacrifice for others and similar unselfish activities in the line of Karma Yoga will be going on in his life making up the major part of his endeavour. Then, according to his previous tendencies and tastes he steps into either the path of devotion (Bhakti Yoga) or the path of knowledge (Jnana Yoga) which alone are directly concerned with the annihilation of the ego, the root-impurity. He who was all this time being carried along by the current of the tributary Jamuna, has now been handed over to the Ganges, the mother river. Here the Jamuna symbolizes the path of Karma *(Karma Yoga)* while the Ganges symbolizes both the path of Love *(Bhakti Yoga)* and the path of Knowledge *(Jnana Yoga)*. These two are, like the Ganges, ever flowing

into the ocean of Brahman unfailingly taking along the aspirant who falls into their current.

To attain Existence–Consciousness–Bliss *(Sat-Chit-Ananda)*, the Self or Brahman, Consciousness *(Chit)* and Bliss *(Ananda)* themselves act as the two Paths i.e., to reach Existence, the Supreme *(Sat)*, Consciousness *(Chit)* and Bliss *(Ananda or Priya)* are the only Paths. The Path of Consciousness *(Chit)* is the Path of Knowledge *(Jnana Marga)* and the Path of Bliss *(Ananda)* is the Path of Love *(Bhakti Marga)*. To say the truth, Brahman, the Sat itself stretches its two arms – Consciousness *(Chit)* and Bliss *(Ananda)* – to draw us to itself or in other words lays Itself down under our feet as the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Love for us to tread upon. Thus, the holy words, "I am the Path and I am the Goal" are proved. **The Path is to attend to 'I am' and the Goal is to remain as 'I am'!**

Have we not classified above the effort of the Karma Yogi which the aspirant now puts forth to annihilate the root-impurity 'I', into the two main Paths, 'The Path of Knowledge (Jnana Marga) and the Path of Love (Bhakti Marga)? The method of enquiring. "What is this feeling of 'I' ?" in other words "Who am I?" is the true Path of Knowledge (Jnana Marga) which has been already explained in detail in Part 1-"The Path of Sri Ramana." Now let us see how the annihilation of the ego, 'I' – the root-impurity, is effected through the Path of Love.

CHAPTER 2

Love or Bhakti

The nature of water is to run down. The water of the ocean stands there itself as a vast mass. The ocean is the lowest place on earth. Therefore, the water in the ocean has no place to run down. But, when water is evaporated by the sun and transformed into clouds, it never stands still in the sky. Driven away by the winds to mountain tops, cooled and transformed into pure water, it runs. As per the nature of water it again starts flowing down seeking for its source in waterfalls, gathers into many streams, runs down to lower places as river and finally merges again into its source, the ocean. In no way it can be stopped till it reaches its source, the ocean. Though it may flow into many channels and irrigate fields or be collected in lakes and tanks or be stopped by springs and wells, it will not remain there for long; for, it evaporates again, is transformed into clouds and tries to reach its source as before! The efforts that we observe as in the life of *jeevas*, individual souls, are exactly like this!

The source of all *jeevas*, not only humans but of all creatures is the Supreme Thing *(Brahman)*. The innumerable souls living in innumerable globes which,

because of an indefinable wondrous power appear to be separated from their source, are ever hurrying back to the Supreme, their source. Just as running down towards the lowest place is the nature of water, the effort observed in *jeevas* in the form of thoughts, speech and actions to return to their source, the Supreme, is verily the nature of *jeevas*. Hence the aim of all *jeevas* is to return to their source, Brahman.

But the rain water while coursing down from the hill-tops, does not run straight towards the ocean. It fills any pool or pit it meets, overflows it and runs down in any direction to the next lower one, according to the characteristics of the land. It does not even know that it is going to the ocean. In the same way, *jeevas* engage themselves according to their tastes into one activity after another with no clear understanding of the final aim of their efforts. The rain water cannot help but be engaged in the only activity it can perform according to its nature, i.e., running down to lower places. Whether it knows the way or not it will certainly reach the ocean soon or later; for, it cannot stop permanently anywhere on its way. So also, *jeevas* cannot help but long for happiness, because such is their nature. Therefore they engage themselves into the only activity they can perform, i.e., the fulfilment of their immediate desires. Whether they are aware or not that the result of all their efforts is attaining their source, Brahman. They certainly will attain even if it is only after many crores of cycles of creations (Re-birth).

As we have described above, the water in the clouds evaporated from the ocean, after once raining on the hill-tops, does not run immediately back into

the ocean in one run as a river. On its way it is again evaporated, and again floats in the form of clouds and when cooled down it again takes the form of water. This is its rebirth. Is it not? So also, before it reaches its source, Brahman, the *jeeva* takes different bodies again and again. Each time it makes efforts in many directions and every time when the body once taken wears out and dies, the *jeeva* takes another body. This is its rebirth.

The efforts in the form of activities of the *jeeva* are like the efforts in the form of the running of the water. Such efforts will never cease, not even for a second until the *jeeva* reaches its source. Just as water, in spite of any amount of obstacles standing on its way will wind its way about again and again and will reach the next deep place, so also the *jeeva*, in spite of any amount of obstacles encountered in its life, persists in making efforts in the forms of actions (karmas).

Just as the nature of water is aiming at the lowest place, the *jeeva*, on account of its nature which is nothing but love for happiness, is always working with mind, speech and body. This love for happiness – the *jeeva's* nature, in its highly refined state, becomes the Supreme Love *(Para Bhakti)* which leads it to the Supreme Thing, because that Supreme Thing is nothing but an unlimited ocean of Bliss. Yet, the movement of the water running down from the hill-tops appears to be arrested when the water reaches a nearby pool. There, also the movement is going on, but in a different direction – the water no longer runs down but rises up. It seems then that the very nature

of water, i.e., running down, is changed into rising up (evaporating). So also, on account of some enjoyment gained in life (including enjoyment here or in other worlds), the nature of the *jeeva*, i.e., love for happiness and making efforts towards it, seems to be changed to a state of contentment where there is no effort, i.e., the nature of Brahman. But, just as the water has to start running down again when the pool is full, the *jeeva* also, has to start making effort again in so many ways he wishes, to attain perfect happiness, because the enjoyments gained here and in other worlds as the fruit of his actions (karmas) cannot satisfy him for long.

Until he reaches the goal, the Supreme Thing (Sat-Chit-Ananda) which is limitless, never-decreasing, ever-brimming over, perfect Bliss, no trivial enjoyment can stop the effort seen as the struggle of life in the *jeeva* and make him keep still. Just as the rain water becomes motionless, effortless and is at rest as soon as it reaches the ocean, so also when the *jeeva* reaches the Supreme Thing, it loses its *jeeva* nature, becomes effortless and as one who has accomplished everything, it regains the nature of Brahman – Eternal Peace.

> "Since his mind form is thus destroyed, and since he is established in the Supreme Truth, for that great Yogi there is not even a single karma to do. For, He has attained His Natural State!"
>
> – Upadesha Undiyar, verse 15.

Let us suppose that the rain water streaming down from the hill-top before it is evaporated, joins a big river ever flowing into the ocean, it reaches the ocean - the source, avoiding all kinds of tribulation and delay.

In the same way, the Sages are the ever-flowing Divine Rivers that take the *jeeva* directly to the Supreme Thing without tribulations. The paths traced by the running of these Divine Rivers are the True Faiths now existing on earth. If one takes one's course through one of these Paths till its very end, one will reach the Supreme Thing, one's Source and Aim and will attain Peace. Each one of these Faiths refines the love for happiness in the individual and courses it directly to the Goal. This direct path of the refining of the love for happiness, is the **Path of Love** (Bhakti Marga). The purpose of those Faiths is to advise and encourage humanity: "O man, all your efforts are in view of your happiness only. The perfect form of your happiness is Bliss, the Supreme State. Do not stop on the way deluded by the glamour of anything else. Awake, arise, stop not in your efforts along the right channel till you reach your state of perfect Bliss, or the real God." When the effort in the form of karmas, which is the nature of *jeevas* is brought under control and regulated, itself it becomes a spiritual practice *(Atma Sadhana)*, the love for the Supreme Thing. Hence the very best effort that one can make is to love the Supreme. This is well told in the following verse of Bhagavan Sri Ramana:

> "The water showered by the clouds risen up from the sea, will not stop, though obstructed till it reaches the sea-abode. Likewise, the embodied soul rises from Thee and will not stop till it reaches Thee, although it wanders here and there through so many paths that come its way (or) it takes to. The bird, though, flying here and there

into the vast sky, has no stay there. The place of rest (for the bird) is nothing but the earth. It is bound to go back the way it came. So also, when the soul goes back the way it came, it will join Thee, the Ocean of Bliss, Oh Aruna Hill!"

- Sri Arunachala Ashtakam, Verse 8.

Bhagavan Ramana is the biggest, the most powerful Divine Ganges nearest to us. Let us fall into this Divine Ganges. It will take us effortlessly to the ocean of Supreme Bliss. Let us be carried along the Path of Sri Ramana. Let there be no swimming against or across the current. Once fallen into this Divine Ganges (Sri Ramana), to be insincere to His teachings is swimming against the current. To twist and interpret His teachings to fit our aims, is swimming across the current, i. e., using the power of the current, not to go to the ocean, but to reach some other points on either of the banks. To dedicate ourselves whole-heartedly and completely and to live the principles of Sri Ramana is being effortlessly carried along the current of that Divine Ganges, i.e., the Path of **Self-surrender**. That which we reach then is nothing but the Ocean of Bliss. Love, when refined perfectly, takes the form of Love for the Supreme Thing. Let us see now how the love can be purified and transformed into Love for the Supreme.

What is Bhakti? It is a feeling of love. The feeling of love exists inherently in all creatures. It is to say that whatever one likes, this liking is the love (Bhakti) towards that thing. **This liking or love, in its pure state, is Shiva***. Love is like the Ganges water. By nature, the water of the Ganges is holy. So is love. The

* Shiva means auspiciousness itself - the perfect Supreme Brahman and not a personal God.

same holy water is considered as superior or inferior according to the cleanliness of the vessel into which it is put. So also, Love or Bhakti has different degrees of superiority or inferiority according to the different degrees of the purity of the mind of *jeevas*. In this manner, the love or Bhakti present in different *jeevas* can be classified into five classes. The fully purified love will shine as Shiva!

Although, as we have said previously, love is present in all living creatures including animals, its progressive purification is visible in human beings only. Animals also have Bhakti towards objects of the world. They try to obtain them through physical strength rather than through the strength of their intelligence. "Might is right" is the law of the animal kingdom. In the fields sheep and goats will graze anywhere regardless of the damage to crops while in the forest the strong animals will kill the weaker ones to feed on them. Just as love is present in beasts and birds in the form of instincts, **in the primitive man the feeling of love is present only in the form of instincts or love for the things of the world *(Vishaya Bhakti)*.** Just as animals, the primitive man is also using his physical strength rather than the strength of his intelligence to fulfil his desires. He is not under any law and order of society, but is abiding by the same law that rules the animal kingdom - **Might is right.** Since the primitive man does not have the sense of justice, he is unaware that others have a necessity and right over the objects of the world just as much as he himself has. So he destroys anyone weaker than he in order to get whatever he wants.

Even among the primitive men it is possible only for the strongest to obtain what he wants. As he finds that the things yet unobtained are more numerous than those already obtained, even the strongest is not contented because of his unfulfilled desires, as the old saying goes, "Desires are infinite". Therefore he tries to improve his powers and abilities more and more to get the fulfilment of all his desires. But, because of the results of the bad karmas done without considering the weakness of others and the wrongs of his actions on account of his selfishness, he takes his following births in bodies deficient in physical strength but with a weak mind which is not deficient in desires; consequently he suffers more and more. Such a man with desires but without the strength to fulfil them, tries to know if there are any methods and means through which he could get easily all he wants and starts his search for it. Let us not forget that such people are even now in our midst! Such men are no better than beasts!

It becomes necessary for those who are wise to guide the primitive man who does not know that selfishness is the root of all sins and that all that he achieves through his 'might' without abiding by 'the right' (the law and order of scriptures) is nothing but an accumulation of sins. This miserable primitive man who is growing weaker through the sins, but whose desires are growing stronger, restlessly roams about and finally comes to a wise One who is utterly desireless, strong with penance and always calm (Blissful), and to Him he complains about his needs. The instructions of such wise men are the *Vedas*.

'Vedas' means knowledge. The codes of conduct regulating the life of a man as given by Sages are the *Vedas*, in other words, the *Vedas* are the Sage Himself! The impure feeling of love in the primitive man – a storm of desires towards worldly objects *(Vishaya Bhakti)* – can only be gradually purified. He who has not yet come to the School (the *Vedas*) where Bhakti is purified, is still a beast.

The School has five standards but only one teacher! "The words of the Sages" is the one Teacher. From now on, for the sake of clarity, let us call the whole Vedas and Vedanta which reform and refine the feeling of love in humanity as 'the Teacher' and the whole of humanity which needs the purification of the feeling of love as 'the Man'.

The Man comes to the Teacher: "Swami, the strength of my body is so insignificant that I cannot obtain all the things which I desire in the world. The desired things in front of me are so innumerable that even through the strength of my intellect, I cannot obtain them. Being dissatisfied by this I am miserable. Is there a quick and easy way to fulfil my desires?" Thus the Man enquires from the Teacher.

"Yes, there is! First know the cause of your inability. The world is the creation of God and is His possession. If you take something from it you must pay for its price. You cannot use your might to grab it without paying the price. If you do so, it is a sin or an unrighteous act. Right action *(Dharma)* alone is the price to pay for and the way to enjoy His possessions. Since you have acted till now not knowing *Dharma*,

your sins have weakened you. When you perform actions (the efforts you make through mind, speech and body) knowing and following *Dharma*, those actions are 'Right actions' *(Vihitakarmas or Sat-karmas)*. Hear from me what they are. For such and such thing that you desire to enjoy in this world and in other world, such and such actions (karmas) are prescribed as well as the proper method, time and place to perform them. Such karmas will give such results". Starting thus, the Vedas teaches the Man first *'Karma-Kanda'* (that part of the Vedas which relates to ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites and the merit arising from a due performance thereof).

He who accepts to live according to these instructions and to carry out the right karmas prescribed (which are not only duties but also meritorious deeds) for the everyday life, has been admitted in the 1st standard of the School. Though, his love here is only a love towards worldly objects *(Vishaya-Bhakti)*, the sense of ego in him at this stage, is made to subside at least to a certain extent. This subsidence of the ego, on account of which he becomes aware of his weakness and, is ready to revere and obey the Wise, as well as to take his advice with humility, is the qualification required for admission in the 1st standard of the School. Are not there people even now, whose ego does not abide even to such a small extent as to accept the disciplines of the Vedas and obey the Wise? Will not be there such people also in the future? They all are like the unruly children who prefer to roam about rather than to attend school.

Is it not that there are as many different minds as there are different people in the world? Is it not that according to its taste each mind needs so many different kinds of objects in the world? Hence, the need to provide different actions *(karmas)* as ways and means through which people can fulfil their innumerable desires; that is why the *Karma Kanda* of the *Vedas* is so vast, elaborate and intricate. Since, the great majority of people are in the grip of the wrong assumption that worldly objects make for happiness*, the *Vedas* have to take pity on them so long as they are under such delusion and like a mother, give them what they want although happiness does not really come out of those objects. The Man is now happy enjoying the objects of the world, the fruit of the Karmas and *Dharmas* which he performed with great enthusiasm. But what of that ?

Can a man be so patient as to endure the delay in emptying the huge dam full of desires through a mere half-inch pipe of *Karma* and *Dharma*? As the man is now aware that, unless every prescribed conditions are satisfied while performing any of the ritualistic actions *(Yajna)*, it will not give the proper fruit (result), being himself extremely worried over the gathering of all the necessary articles as prescribed. It requires very great effort to perform to perfection even a minor ritualistic action. Which man will not long for the result of a *Rajasuya Yajna* – to be recognized as an emperor of the whole world and enjoy all the emperor's privileges and prerogatives? But where can an ordinary man go to obtain the necessary articles? It can be done only by a mighty king! And even so, how many are the obstacles

* Ref "Path of Sri Ramana-Part I

standing in the way of its completion? Is it not the nature of man to desire enjoyments, even those enjoyments which are the fruits of such *karmas* as are beyond his power to perform? The Man who performs different *karmas* with great earnestness to appease his many desires, enjoys the results of his *karmas* in many consecutive births and even in different worlds; but **the greater the enjoyments of the objects of the world the more fiercely is set ablaze the fire of his desires.** When he has learnt that the fruits yielded by the karmas which are truly insentient* (i.e., they cannot yield fruit except by the will of the Lord), performed by mind and body are limited; the Man thus, pitifully reflects:- "Are there no other means that will give more and quicker benefits than those *karmas* to my efforts?" – The Man believing that he can get some clues, (even for his present problem), from the same Teacher who taught him *karmas*, comes to the Teacher (the *Vedas*) again.

Innumerable births might have passed before this kind of dejection towards *karmas* which has now come to him, only because of performing them in the prescribed manner, as taught in the 1st standard. All this time he remains as a 1st standard student. The maturity in the form of this dejection which he now has indicates, is the result that he has thoroughly and successfully undergone the training of the 1st standard. Even today there are many among us, who are studying in the 1st standard; of course, they even hold high degrees in some of our present day universities; but yet, in our School of purification of love they are

* See foot-note page-65

only 1st standard students! Why feel sorry for them when there are still crores and crores of people happily wandering outside the School not even agreeing to enrol in the 1st standard to perform *Karmas* and undergo its disciplined life?

Having achieved his 1st standard, the Man again comes to the Teacher and enquires: "Swami, the prescribed *karmas* are innumerable, I feel that I have neither the time nor the energy to perform perfectly all of them. But, unless I enjoy all the fruits of all such *karmas*, in this world and in others, I will not be satisfied. Therefore, I have sought your feet to find out if, there are any other means easier by which performing *karmas* will yield more abundant results, and if so, to follow them".

"Yes, there are! All your *karmas* do not yield more abundant results, because they cannot yield fruit of their own accord. *Karmas* are merely insentient.* They yield fruit only by the ordinance of the Lord – God. The many different names and forms of God have great divine powers in bestowing readily upon the worshipper the many different fruits (results) through an easy worship (Upasana). Therefore, if you worship the different names and forms of God, through Their Grace you will get, even with only a little effort, your

* "Action yields fruit by the ordinance of God. Action being insentient, can it be God?"

- Upadesha Undiyar – verse 1

Those Tapasvis who lived in the Daruka forest were under the wrong impression that through their own efforts only in doing karmas they could achieve everything; but, finally they had to be shamed and instructed by Lord Shiva Himself.

desired objects in abundance. Should you want a successful completion of your undertakings without obstacles, worship Ganapathi, the Elephant-faced God. Since, Sarasvati is the name and form of Goddess having powers to bestow all learning, should you desire to acquire all learning and thereby achieve name and fame, worship Her. Should you desire children, house, property, wealth, gold etc., worship Goddess Lakshmi. Like this, Gods and Goddesses are there who fulfil the many desires of yours. Each one of them such as Rudra, Vishnu, Subrahmanya, Devi etc. is a different aspect of the names and forms of God. There are appropriate mantras and methods *(Pooja Vidhi)* to worship everyone of these Gods and Goddesses. There are also many other methods of worship* such as *Yantras* (worship of mystical or astrological diagrams) and *Tantras* (use of unusual objects and methods in worship). Have all these according to your needs and tastes and start worshipping God. Through this worship the gain is greater and the labour is less than through *karmas*". Thus the Vedas, the Teacher instructs the Man in the worship of God.

The Man, as soon as he hears that, by securing the help of those Gods through this worship, instead of depending upon the *karmas* in the form of his own efforts, he can get all enjoyments in this world and in other worlds; now takes to the worship of the names and forms of God with great hopes and enthusiasm.

---

* Ravana, the King of Lanka and others like him acquired in this way such powers as to conquer this world and even Indra the King of Heavens.

The knowing and realising that his powers in the form of making efforts are trivial, his acceptance of a powerful supreme Being far superior to himself and his faith in that Being, are the new developments of his understanding. The following four stanzas written by Sri Muruganar, a senior devotee of Sri Bhagavan, as introductory verses to *'Upadesha Undiyar'* composed by Bhagavan Sri Ramana, will throw light upon our subject, is mentioned here: -

(i) Those who were performing ritualistic practices in Darukavana (a forest of that name) were spiritually on the decline on account of following the old path of *Kamya Karmas** (Purva Mimamsa).

(ii) On account of the deceitful egotism they became immensely infatuated believing that there is no God except the *karmas.*

(iii) Seeing the outcome of *karmas* done while rejecting God who ordains the fruit of karmas, their pride was vanquished.

(iv) "Protect us graciously", thus they prayed with tears, Lord Shiva bestowing His gracious look on them, and gave spiritual instructions.

The real great benefit the Man has now obtained as the result of performing *karmas* is the subsidence of his ego, to such an extent that he is now humble before God and bows down to Him seeking His Grace. Thus he is now promoted into II[nd] standard to put into practice the instructions received by Him.

* Kamya Karmas – actions for the fulfilment of desires.

The Man who now has become a worshipper of God, with great zeal starts worshipping the prescribed different names and forms of God according to his needs and desires with the help of all *mantras, yantras* and *tantras*. The majority of the people who are called now-a-days theists and devotees of God are studying in the II[nd] standard only. These people think that they are devoted to God. **How can it be, since their love or Bhakti is only towards the desired objects! Is it not?** Their liking – their devotion is only for enjoyments in this world and in other worlds! They call upon God only to help them in this matter. Here, Gods are needed by them as helpers only. Their bhakti is only towards objects of the world and not towards God. **Before the Man was enrolled in the School the feeling of love in him i.e. his bhakti was only *vishaya bhakti* and his physical and mental strength were the means to fulfil it. When he was in the 1[st] standard, his bhakti had vishaya bhakti and the karmas were the means to fulfil it. Even now in the present II[nd] standard his bhakti is still only *vishaya bhakti* and instead of karmas the different names and forms of God are the means to fulfil it.** The Man in this stage starts with zeal his worship.

"I went on a pilgrimage to *Tirupathi[1]; that God of seven hills will bestow wealth on me... I have carried the 'Kavadi'[4] to Lord Murugan[2] of Palani[1]. I gave Him a sacred bath with milk and the five delicious substances – grapes, bananas, honey, sugar and ghee *(Panchamrutam)*. I am doing the recitation of **'Tirumurugatrupadai**[3]. By His Grace all our afflictions will be removed and the family will be well provided..

* See foot note page 69

I had the **darshan** of Lord Shiva[2] in Kasi[1] (Banares) and Rameshwaram[1] and I have taken a holy bath in the Ganges[1] and the Yamuna. So I will get good virtuous children... What can my enemy do in the court, for I am daily reciting **'Adityahridaya Stotram'[3]?**... When I start something it must have a successful end without any obstacle; is it not? So I always worship Ganapathi[2]... Throughout the year I have been doing **'Lakshmi Ashtotram'[3]** and **'Lakshmi Sahasranamam'[3]** Her gracious glance will bring me so much wealth... I never miss to do or attend **'Lalitha Sahasranamam'[3]**, **'Trisati'[3]**, **'Chandika Homam'[4]** and **'Sri Chakra Puja'[4].** It is Devi[2] who is giving me everything!... I am determined to go and have darshan of 'Chidambaram[1] Nataraja'[2], 'Annamalai Appa'[2], the Lord of 'Kalahasti[1]; Lord Mahalingam[2], Lord Vaideeshvaran[2] , and Lord of 'Kailash'[1]. I do even **'Shivashtotram'[3]** and **'Sahasra Namam'[2]**, for, is He not the Supreme Lord to bestow on me everything in this world and in other worlds?... One thousand **'Gayatri'[3]** along with **'Sandhya Vandanam'[3]** twice a day I do...Look at the brilliance on me and the glow on my face!... Every year I conduct in my home Parayana of **'Bhagavad Gita'[3]**, **'Rama Nama Sankirtanam'[3]. Sri Rama Navami Utsavam'[4]** also!... These worships of different names and forms of God are the only way to improve my lot!"

Thus, on account of the waxing desires towards the objects of the world, the belief and love of the Man

Note :- The words having the number (1) are the names of sacred places; (2) are the names of Gods; (3) are the names of holy recitations; (4) are the names worships.

in the II[nd] standard of our School, towards the different names and forms of God, is also increasing. Now the Man is more and more engrossed in worship!

Innumerable births are spent in these worships. The Man is also getting many more enjoyments in this world and in other worlds than those who do not worship. Is it not a fact, that the imagination – the world of different enjoyments and the different likes of the mind for them - is infinite? Where is the end!!

"Though the whole world is conquered and ruled over, yet one is not contented and wants to rule over the seas! One who has secured heaps and heaps of gold like *Kubera* (the treasurer of Heaven) will still be mad after alchemy! One who has lived long will break his head in search of the elixir of immortality!! Thus there is no limit to desires..." sings Saint Tayumanavar.

When Ravana, Hiranyakashipu and Indra – (for every mighty one there is a mightier one) – who had become extraordinarily powerful through their worship *(Upasana)*, were sorely discontented and dug their own grave with their jealousy towards each others and cravings for other's property, how much contentment can the Man secure through his petty power of worship? He becomes green with envy when he comes across someothers who are more advanced than he, in worship. He is pining away because of his many unfulfilled desires.

For the Man who spends most of his time in making a living, after sleep has taken its share, only a small portion of time is left over; is it not? How many among the unlimited number of aspects of God

can be worshipped everyday in such a limited time available to him? According to the auspiciousness of the day the worship of Goddess Lakshmi, eats away most of the available time on Tuesdays and Fridays; the worship of Shiva eats away Mondays and Thursdays; the worship of the Nine Planets *(Navagrahas)* eats away Saturdays; the worship of Sun eats away Sundays. Also on the other six days other Gods have to be worshipped as well! Anyway even on Wednesdays they all have to be attended to in addition to the special Gods! How can he do full justice to his desire of worshipping all those Gods everyday?

In spite of its liking for diversity, the mind is able to attach itself to one name and form of God in preference to another. On this principle, a special liking towards one of the Gods will readily grow in the Man, even in the midst of his multiple worships. Naturally with great delight and love he spends more time in worshipping that particular aspect of God which attracts him more. Consequently he finds that his interest towards some other names and forms of God is decreasing more and more. Besides, he feels that it is important to attend the different yearly festivals held in different holy places in honour of one or the other Gods that he worships regularly in his home. Which is to be attended to and which one not?

When through his destiny (*Prarabdha*) some difficulties and miseries start to rise in his life, he begins to think that they are due only to his aforesaid negligence towards the worship of those Gods; but

really it may not be so. **His present destiny (*Prarabdha*) is a portion of the fruit of those karmas, knowingly or unknowingly done in the past. None of these Gods that he now worships will or can interfere with his destiny.**

For the performance of these worships it has become necessary for him to maintain several kinds of cleanliness, both of body and mind and also to take some vows to be carried out in his daily life. How is it possible for one who does not observe ceremonial and personal cleanliness, to worship God? By maintaining these kinds of cleanliness, not only many bad habits including laziness but also many of his petty desires had to take leave of him. The anecdote given in, Appendix III about the ultimate purpose of observing 'Personal cleanliness (Acharas)' was once narrated by Sri Bhagavan Ramana and was recorded in its essence form by Sri Muruganar in verse 680 of *'Guru Vachaka Kovai'*. Our Man is having now a pure way of life and has gained the habit of depending upon God. But, yet, not having sufficient time and energy for his worship of so many names and forms of God (at home and abroad)' not even for sleep, his mind is once more in the grip of an increasing confusion. Thus, the Man comes again to the Teacher.

"Swami, through your grace I have been worshipping many different names and forms of God according to your instructions. But, I have, neither the time nor the ability to worship them all to their satisfaction and to my heart's content. Because of this, the worship of some of them has to be neglected and

I often get into troubles and miseries. Unless I worship all my Gods, all my desires will not be fulfilled; is it not? Not knowing what to do about this, I came seeking your help with a confused mind. Is not there a quicker and easier way to fulfil my desires ?' Thus the Man enquires, with great hope, from the Teacher!

"Yes, there is! Listen to me. God is only one. The one God alone is worshipped in different names and forms, each of which is said to have the particular power to fulfil a particular desire of the worshipper. He is not many. Upto now have you not been worshipping His many different names and forms with love? Now tell me, towards which one of them do you have the greater love. Whichever of them attracts your mind most, that one is your **Beloved God** *(Ishta Deivam)*!" thus asked the Teacher.

Do we not love one particular deity more than another among all those names and forms, such as Shiva, Vishnu, Devi etc.? The non-Hindu readers also have a preference towards a particular aspect of the godhead of their own religion; is it not so? Let us now suppose that particular aspect of the godhead loved by the reader has been mentioned by the Man as his Beloved God *(Ishta Deivam)*.

After thinking deeply, the Man mentions to the Teacher Lord Krishna, the deity who all this time had absorbed his mind and made him forget the worship of others. Just as we have said at the beginning of this chapter that '**the Teacher**' stands for the *Vedas* and '**the Man**' stands for humanity, let us assume from now on, that **Lord Krishna** stands

for the Beloved God (*Ishta Deivam*) worshipped by the Man.

The Man adds, "The incarnation of Lord Vishnu, the Whole, manifested through the young beautiful blue form of Sri Krishna who came to protect the good and destroy the evil-doer, who gave us the holy Bhagavad Gita, is keeping my heart at His Feet!"

The Teacher says, "Yes; let Him be your Beloved God. Sri Krishna is the only Supreme Thing! All this time it was only He, who through different names and forms received your worship and fulfilled your different desires. Moreover, your attention was divided between so many Gods that you were not able to direct it fully towards one of them in particular. As you have now understood that it was Sri Krishna alone who acted through all other Gods, gather all your attention and give it wholly to Him. 'To Him alone ask whatever you want – gold, wealth, learning, children, success or whatever more you would like. He is the 'Wish Yielding Tree *(Kalpa Taru)*' that will give you everything you wish for. Now your worship has become easy; do it towards your Beloved God to your heart's content; get all your desires fulfilled and be happy."

Hearing these words of the Teacher, the Man's confusion was removed. He was now ensured of having all his desires fulfilled by the one Beloved God towards whom he can now give the whole of his attention, and he is also relieved of the trouble of worshipping other Gods, which he had done so far without much interest. Having thus been instructed to

worship the Beloved God alone, the Man, after paying homage to the Teacher, happily returns home.

The Man who is now worshipping only one God – his Beloved God – is in the III^{rd} standard of the School where love *(Bhakti)* is purified. The practice of *karmas* was done in the I^{st} standard. The worship of different names and forms of God was performed in the II^{nd} standard. The worship of the one Beloved God is performed in the III^{rd} standard. The III^{rd} standard has two sections, (a): namely worship of God with love for objects *(Vishaya bhakti)*, and (b): with love for God only *(Deiva bhakti)*. As our Man still has only the love of objects, he is in the section (a) of the III^{rd} standard.

"Not liking to go against the words of the great Ones, 'Even when one wants mere food, clothes and such small things for happiness or otherwise Liberation (*Moksha*), the greatest thing, one should not try to get it, but only by coming and asking You', I have come to You, O Lord of Vadalur...." Thus sings Sri Ramalinga Swami.

As per the above words of Sri Ramalinga Swami the Man seeks the fulfilment of all his different needs and desires only from his Beloved God. What he loves here are the objects, and his Beloved God is only the helper; that is all! But his mind which all this time was diverted towards many Gods and thereby weakened, is now focussed on his one Beloved God; that makes his worship far more effective.

> "Because the mind branches out into innumerable thoughts, the power of attention of each thought

becomes very weak. As thought subside more and more, the mind becomes one-pointed and thereby gains strength"

'Who Am I?' – Bhagavan Sri Ramana

The mind which is nothing but the reflection of the Self, is a very great wondrous power in its pure state. It is so powerful that it can create and see anything which it thinks of intensely, in gross form.

The main point of Yoga is to collect the scattered thoughts into one and fix the mind on that one thought only. The worship of God is a means to focus the mind on one point, setting aside the other innumerable thoughts concerning one's daily activities rising (in one) during the waking state. In the Path of Love *(Bhakti Marga)* when such confidence in God: "God will look after everything in my life; why should I think and worry about it" increases, thousands of unnecessary thoughts will depart. But this alone is not sufficient. The important point in Bhakti Yoga is to fix the mind on one name and form of God, and not change the worship from one name and form of God to another and thereby allowing the mind to branch out into so many thoughts and waver. On the other hand, composing Bhajan-slogans such as,

"Rama Krishna Namo, Rahim.
Lambodara Sri Shunmukaya,
Bhama Mary Buddha Shiva,
Parvati, Allah Jesu Natha."

mentioning all names and forms of all Gods in all religions and putting them together in the form of one verse of 'Universal Prayer' or 'Japa' and recommending

all people to do Japa or recitation of it, will not be a sadhana in *Bhakti Marga?* In doing so, the mind will not become one-pointed but will only become scattered. An interreligious Bhajan like this can be useful to a certain extent to religious reformers as a contrivance to point out that God who is worshipped under so many names and forms in different religions is one only; to the secular masses who, not having the right discrimination, take to religious fanaticism and preaching, and who by doing so, only quarrel among themselves and waste their time and energy away; but, for an aspirant *(Sadhaka)* who wants to attain God, this shall in no way be the spiritual practice *(Sadhana)*! Through this practice the mind cannot cling to anyone of the names and forms of God. **The right sign that one has understood that God is one only, is one's clinging to one God only. Spelling and singing so many different names of God, only betrays the lack of faith and understanding of the oneness of God!**

The worship of his Beloved God under a particular name and form, becomes a way for him to see the formless Supreme in that form.

> "...One may worship in whatever form giving whatever name... it is a way to see the Supreme in that name and form."
>
> – Ulladu Narpadu, verse 8.

Though his love is towards objects *(Vishaya bhakti)*, only because of the intensity of his worship, along with the fulfilment of his desires, he is even able to see his Beloved God, Sri Krishna in person

whenever he calls upon Him. "If one has so much earnestness and love, one can rouse God-consciousness even in a stone." Sri Ramakrishna said once! Here let us remind the readers our statement on page 29 that all we see outside is only within!

In answer to the appeal of Sri Arunagiri Nathar, Lord Subrahmanya appeared in person in a pillar in front of all those present including the king. In his third year Sri Jnana Sambandha called 'Appa and Amma' (father and mother) and Lord Shiva and Parvati appeared before him in persons and gave him Divine Milk. Sri Sundaramoorti, one of the 63 saints, called Lord Shiva when in need of whatever it happened to be – gold, rice, house, wife and he received it! From his very young age Sri Nam Dev of Pandharpur was able to eat, live and play with Lord Vittal. Sri Ramakrishna was able to live with Mother Kali Devi like a child lives with his mother. Many more are such incidents in which so many great devotees* were able to enjoy the association with God in person in His different names and forms, to prove that one can through one's devotion see God in person as the Man did. In the West, Saint Theresa of Lisieux, a Roman catholic nun, had the constant company of the Child Jesus.

As his beloved Krishna answers him whenever he calls Him, the Man was able to get all his desires fulfilled. When we see daily in front of us that man,

---

* It is only to prove that one can see God in his different names and forms that those great Ones are mentioned here. Let not the reader be mistaken into the idea that those great Ones belong to the III standard (a) in our School !

who is an insignificant and powerless ego, is able to help another who is equally insignificant and powerless, is it impossible and is it not a wonder that God, the All-powerful helps such a man? According to what we have already mentioned. "We see our Self as God, world and soul only through the creative power of our mind", the very moment one think that one is a *Jeeva* (individual soul) different from God, the gracious "Hands" of that God stretch out to help one and pull one back to the Supreme Knowledge of oneness through ever so many ways. Thus the Man is able to see his Beloved Krishna and associate with Him. Though his Beloved Krishna often appears to him, He deliberately does not fulfil some of his desires: for, the Man is not able to discriminate between what is good and what is bad for himself. Moreover, God will not allow his ego to wax more and more in arrogance by thinking : "My Beloved Krishna is there to grant me whatever I want". This is why in His Divine Play *(Leela)*, the Lord either refuses to fulfil some of his desires or He fulfils them in such a way that their fulfilment will bring troubles in their train. We should not forget that, there were such incidents even in the life of those saints whom we mentioned above.

In order to marry Sangili Nachiyar Saint Sundaramoorti requested Lord Shiva to leave the temple and to reside for one day under a certain tree. Lord Shiva's compliance with his request resulted in the loss of both eyes by the devotee later on. In order to reward the spirit of service of Saint Appar, which was lacking in Sri Jnanasambandha, Lord Shiva gave

both of them a gold coin of equal value. But later on when the coins were tested by the goldsmith, Sri Jnanasambandha's coin was found to be of less value. On being ridiculed by Saint Gorakumba as "The unbaked clay pot" in the assembly of Sages, Nam Dev was very offended and went to his Beloved God, Vittal for support, but He also joined with his scoffers and confirmed him to be an "Unbaked clay pot"! There are many more such examples.

Many are those whose further progress is retarded and who are wasting their time, even lives altogether, after attaining the stage in which the Man now is, thereby losing the right path. They boast:- "Look! I have seen God! The Goddess appears to me in person! ...Look! Lord Seeta-Rama never fails to respond to my calls !... Truly, whenever I call, Lord Subrahmanya readily comes and attends to my needs!!..." I assure you that I can do anything for anybody with the help of my beloved God!!! ...", thus they gather a crowd around them and distribute sacred ashes *(Vibhooti)* and *'Kumkum'!* This is downright foolishness. If one's ego has subsided, at least to such an extent that one understands "God who is gracious to me is ever gracious to others also; God who helps me, equally helps others.", this kind of downfall will not happen in one's life. Only such an ego which is unwilling to subside and rather very willing to jump up, easily gets caught by the infatuation of *Siddhis* (thaumaturgic powers) and becomes a slave to the vile courtesan of flatteries, losing the right purpose of this human life.

> "Even though all the worlds are renounced as a straw and all the Scriptures (the *Vedas*) are at

their finger tips, for those who are caught by the vile courtesan of flattery it is indeed very difficult to free themselves from being a slave to Her (Maya) ."

Thus, warns Sri Ramana in verse 37 of the Supplement to *Ulladu Narpadu.*

When others come to know of such individual who sees God in person, they without doubt, believe him to be a God-realized man, although he has not even achieved love for God *(Daiva bhakti)*, i.e., one who has not yet been promoted to standard III[rd] (b), and only has love towards worldly objects and name and fame *(Vishaya bhakti)*, i.e., who is still in standard III[rd] (a). Why should they not! Simply because they too are craving for worldly objects and also want divine help just as the student of II[nd] standard does! Among those who flock to him, many may be great scholars holding university degrees or, they may hold very high positions in society or, they may be immensely rich! He leads them just like the blind leads the blind!!

Let us now see the state of the Man (our Man, the humanity)) who is presently living in the holy company of his Beloved Krishna. He still wants worldly objects; therefore his love is still *Vishaya bhakti* and his Beloved God is still only the means. Many births may roll on in this way. Yet, as the Supreme *Sat* Himself graciously gives His company to the Man in the name and form of his Beloved God, this association becomes the precious *Sat-Sang**.

* Sat-sang does not mean a mere gathering of those who look upon themselves as good people. Sri Bhagavan used to say, "Sat-Sang means association with Sat-Truth, the Reality. It also mean the association with those who have realised the Truth – Sat."

"By association with *Sat* – the Truth, the attachment (towards worldly objects) goes away..."

– 'Ulladu Narpadu – Supplement' - verse 1.

Is there a more intense *Sadhana* better than Sat-Sang to protect and, lead us? Although he does not know how, the Man, by being near his Beloved Krishna and in his constant Divine company, is gradually losing the impurity of his mind which becomes clear. It is the same *Vedas* who stood all this time as his Teacher who now is standing before him as his Beloved God who, sometimes fulfilling his desires and sometimes not, matures him through many re-births. From the change now occurring in his mind, we can understand his growing maturity.

He reflects :- "What a wonder! Whenever I call, my Lord Krishna appears condescendingly before me. Whatever I ask, He gives. Even my mother and father have not given me so much love and compassion. Is there anyone else who loves me so much? How can I express my gratefulness in return? What does He need from me? Nothing! How little do I love Him who loves me so much without obligation or indebtedness, without expectation and with no reason in particular. So great is His love for me from my Lord Krishna! But from me, so much love is on worldly objects! Is this gratefulness? Shame on me! Really, I do not love Him even with a thousandth of the love He gives me. I beg and trouble Him for so many things. Is this my love for my Beloved God? Alas! Shame! This is only **love for object;** not the **Love for God!** I am the *Jeeva* who cannot even breathe but through His Grace. This

wealth is given by Him; the health is enjoyed by His Grace. My intelligence is also due to His Grace; it is only with all these that I am worshipping Him. Yet I say, 'I have done this worship; the fruit must be given to me'! "Is this not an unfair trading? How mean am I!"

"Now I understand that He knows even my future wants and, that He had been preparing for their fulfilment long before I even came to know about those wants. If so, that means that He is anxious and gracious towards me even before I become anxious to pray to Him for them. As He is All-knowing, He understands what I need and when I need them and, as He is All-powerful, He fulfils everyone of those needs. He knows and fulfils only because He is All-love! Then what should I ask and, why should I ask? By informing Him of my needs, I degrade the All-knowing to not-knowing; by complaining about my miseries for relief, I degrade the All-powerful to powerlessness; and by demanding its fruit, I use my worship as cash to buy the love from Him who is All-love! What I do to Him is only a three-fold dishonour. Such is my gratefulness! Is this Love for God (*Daiva Bhakti*)? To hell with me! I will no longer ask anything from Him. Now I will ask Him for HIM alone, whose, gracious Hands are caring for me and bringing me up. **From today onwards HE is my only need; let me inform Him of my decision."**

So, he goes to the shrine and calls his beloved Krishna.

A Young child takes in his small hand the food served to him by his mother and tries to feed her. He

does this out of love for his mother. Throughout all this time the nature of the worship of the Man was like the feeding of the child, it was not done out of love for his Beloved God, but out of love for worldly objects. The worship that he has been doing along till now was in no way better than the offering of His own toe to the treacle Ganesh*! On account of this ignorance for the nature of his parent's love, a child demands for this or for that. But, when he grows up into adult, he understands that his parents are providing everything for him and even for his future prospects, he then, no longer asks for anything as he used to do as a child. So also, as the discrimination of our Man has now matured, his decision not to pray for anything worldly objects has been brought about by the correct knowledge that God is All-knowing, All-powerful and All-love.

His Beloved Krishna, who had been gradually purifying the feeling of love in him from the beast-love (love for worldly objects) of the primitive man, to his present state of Love for God, and also who released him from the imprisonment of selfishness

---

* The story of the treacle Ganesh as told by Shri Bhagavan Ramana:-

A certain poor traveller, a worshipper of Ganesh (Ganapathi), not finding a temple of Ganesh anywhere to perform his daily worship to the image before his mid-day meal, resolved to make an image out of the small quantity of treacle with him. He then proceeded with the ritual and to his bewilderment he found that he had nothing left for food-offering. So the simple-minded wayfarer pinched out the toe of the idol and offered it to his Ganesh! And thus felt satisfied in his Pooja. What is the meaning of the offering? Ganesh is given to Ganesh! In the same manner, **whatever we offer to God is neither our property nor apart from Him.**

through right discrimination and dispassion, and made him understand what exactly is the nature of true Love for God; appears now before him as usual and makes kind enquiries: "My child, what are you lacking? Why do you call me so anxiously? What happened to you?"

The Man answers:- "O Lord, forgive me for my mistake of loving the objects of the world instead of loving You, the perfect Love Itself."

> "O Annamalai, Form of Love itself! Thou hast claimed me who have no such love to make me think of Thee and pine for Thee and melt me like fire melts wax. Does it befit Thee now to let me waste away by failing to bestow upon me the love for Thee? O Bliss born out of Love! O Nectar springing up in the heart of Thy devotees! What can I say to Thee! Thy will is my will and that itself is my happiness, O Lord of my life!
>
> –'Sri Arunachala Pathikam' - verse 2

> "O Supreme! I am the foremost of those who do not have such excellent discrimination as to give up all worldly attachments and cling only to Thy Feet. Taking all my burden as yours, ordain the 'mine' in all actions to cease. What indeed can be a burden to Thee that sustaineth the whole universe? O Lord, enough of the trouble I have had by leaving Thee and by bearing the burden of this world on my head. O Arunachala, who art the Lord! Think no more of keeping me away from Thy Feet."
>
> – 'Sri Arunachala Pathikam'- verse 9

"O Arunachala, like a magnet attracts iron and cannot release it, attract me and without leaving me, be ever in union with me."

–'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - verse 16.

"O Arunachala, as ice dissolves in water (and becomes water), dissolve me in Love, in Thee, the form of Love."

–'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - verse 101.

"O Annamalai, the very moment Thou didst claim me, Thou didst take as Thine my body and soul. Can I have then any grievance for myself? As both merit and demerit cannot exist without Thee, I do not think of them but of Thee only. O my (Real) Soul, do whatever that Thou wilt. Grant me, O Beloved, only ever increasing love for Thy Feet."

–'Arunachala Navamanimalai–verse 7

"From now onwards there is no such thing for me as a need in my life. Let anything take place in my life as you will "

"... all such sorts of ups and downs, happiness or misery, prosperity or poverty, honour or dishonour, fame or ill-fame..."

The only need is You alone; fulfill that one need of mine, my Lord!

– Sri Ramalinga Swamy.

The Man who was studying all this time in the III[rd] standard (a) having *Vishaya bhakti* and the Beloved God as the means, feels now **love for his Beloved God**. While in III[rd] standard (a), although he appealed

to his Beloved God, his feeling of love was scattered towards so many worldly objects - for the love of objects – only, and not for the love of God. As the scattered love was transferred away from objects and directed towards his Beloved God, the love now becomes a powerful arrow which is shot out to his Beloved God. The shooting of this arrow (of love) is his promotion to the IIIrd standard (b). By experiencing all enjoyments as the gifts of his Beloved Krishna throughout many births, the Man now, finds out the truth that the fire of desires cannot be extinguished with the oil of objects. Thus he gets perfect dispassion (*Vairagya*). **The discrimination to love the Giver rather than the gift now dawns in him.** Thus, he gets the pure Love for God *(Daiva Bhakti)*. He now has perfect dispassion and pure love; with these two wings he flies fast towards his Target.

Does not his Beloved God know what to grant and how to grant to the true devotee, our Man, who after renouncing everything and forgetting everything, now stands before Him praying "O my Lord, give Yourself to me and take possession of me"? Will not the Lord, who, during all this time, when the devotee lived in ignorance, fulfilled even his petty desires; now answer his present whole-hearted, supreme appeal? He takes a first step to lead the devotee further on the path, and to answer his appeal; **the Gracious loving form in which He used to stand before him, disappears!** Although he calls Him ever so many times, his Beloved God never appears again! When the worldly objects, which have been discarded with the rising of right discrimination in him, are no longer able to attract him, and, because of the true love that

has blossomed in him, the only attracting thing is his Beloved God. What is he now to do, when even He (His Divine Form) disappears? In what state of intense restlessness and suffering will he be? Will he not feel the pang of separation ? Now his heart cries out in prayer:-

> "O Beloved... if Thou, who hast already claimed me through Thy Grace, now does not show Thyself to me who am in agony in this world of cruel illusion because of the wistful longing for Thee, what will happen to me when this body dies? O Sun to the suns, can the lotus blossom whithout seeing the Sun?".
>
> – Sri Arunachala Pathikam' Verse 1
>
> "Protect me; be my support so to cling that I may not droop down like a tender creeper left without a support".
>
> –'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' – verse 72
>
> "For whose sake didst Thou win me? If now Thou dost forsake me, the world will blame Thee".
>
> – 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 4.
>
> "Escape this blame. Why didst Thou then make me think of Thee? Now who can leave the other?"
>
> – 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 5.
>
> "O the One that bestows LOVE which is greater than that of one's own mother, is this then Thy Love?
>
> – 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 6
>
> "Bestow Thy Grace upon me; do not tarnish Thy blemishless fame of giving unasked!"
>
> – 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 22

"Thou of angerless nature! What wrong have I done that Thou hast made me the target of Thy wrath?"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 25

"Softening more and more and melting through intense devotion I entered Thee as my refuge. Then Thou didst stand unmoved!"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 59.

"In me, who had no love for Thee, Thou roused attraction for Thee. Do not cheat me now; bestow Thy Grace upon me."

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 60

"There is no use of a fruit that is over ripe and spoilt. That alone is good to eat it when it is properly ripe; come and eat it (me)."

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 61

"Unless Thou dost give Thyself to me and take me so that I may no longer suffer, Thou art Yama (Death) to me!"

–'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 62.

"Do Thou mature me with Thy look on me, Thy thought on me and Thy touch on my body and graciously make me Thine."

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 63.

"Who was it (but Thee) that ruined my living by throwing mud into my mouth?"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 88.

"Who was it, who, unknown to anyone, allured me and stole away my mind?"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 89.

"Thou hast delivered me from the madness for the world and hast turned me into a mad man having madness for Thee. Now, the medicine to cure this madness also is Thy Grace."

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 66.

"Like an unexorcizable ghost Thou possessed me and turned me into a ghost so that my ghostliness may cease. What a wonder it is!

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 71.

"Unless Thou dost embrace me, my body will melt into water through anguish and I shall be lost in the river of tears."

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 34.

"If Thou dost reject me, spurningly saying 'Chi', the Karmas done in the past, present and future will burn me; else, pray, tell me in which way can I be saved?"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 35.

"Shouldst Thou forsake me, I will be miserable. So, do bless me that when I leave the body I do not lose hold of Thee".

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 96.

"When will the wave of thought in me cease so that I may reach Thee, the most minute as well as the most great?"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 57.

"I am one of mean intellect and prays only when overwhelmed by misery. Yet bestow Thy Grace upon me; do not cheat me."

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 78.

"By which power can I, who am less than a dog, seek Thee and attain Thee?"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 39.

"If, without responding, Thou remaineth silent like a stone, does this silence befit Thee?"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 87.

"When I approached Thee as my only God and Protector, Thou didst utterly annihilate me!"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 48.

"Do shower upon me Thy delightful Grace before the fire of ardent longing for Thee, burns me to ashes!"

– 'Arunachala Aksharamanamalai' - Verse 55.

"O my Beloved God, Ramana, do come to me and let me consult You and act at your command in every action in my daily life, even in placing a thing, taking a thing, getting up, sitting down, going somewhere or not going, doing something or not doing, drinking water or not drinking, liking a thing or disliking it and in so many other such things".

– Sri Ramanan Varuhai * - Verse 81.

Why does not God now appear to His devotee? When the Man asked, "Give Yourself to me", did he really know what his Beloved God was? He did not! HE alone knows it. Because the Man thinks that this name and form is He ; he wants to get only that

* A poetical work composed by the author when he was anguishly longing to see Shri Ramana in form after Sri Bhagawan's Nirvana in 1950.

beloved name and form; but God is not ready to cheat His devotee by granting him what he wants. **The aim of God is to give him what He really IS.**

Out of the five aspects of *Brahman* – Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, Name and Form - *(Sat-Chit-Ananda-Nama-Roopa)*, the first three, Existence, Consciousness and Bliss are the Real aspects and the remaining two, Name and Form are the unreal aspects. All this time the Man was only enjoying the holy company of the unreal aspect of *Brahman*, one of His names and forms. But as soon as this name and form vanishes, the Man who believes it to be the 'real nature' of his Beloved God, thinks that he has lost his God, and suffers from the pangs of separation. This great suffering in him is due to the absence of the knowledge of the real aspects of *Brahman*–Existence, Consciousness and Bliss, the real nature of the Supreme.

> "For Thee I am longing, but without the true knowledge, and I am weary! Do Thou grant me the Supreme Knowledge of Thee, so That my weariness may go, O Arunachala."
>
> – 'Arunachaḷa Aksharamanamalai' – Verse 40

Knowing that the present pangs of separation of our Man are due to his love for Him (God) and this in turn is due to not having the right knowledge of His reality, (Real Nature) and that the only remedy for this is to bestow upon him the Supreme Knowledge; God withdraws from the sight of the Man His unreal aspects, the name and form.

The Man now wonders aimlessly like an insane; sometimes walking, sometimes stopping, endlessly

and untiringly cries out in agony and calls "Krishna, O Krishna" in low or high pitch, he has become God-mad having no thoughts for wife, children, house or work, but he remains drowned in the meditation on his Beloved Krishna Who has overwhelmed him even without his effort! This Man who is now suffering from the pangs of separation, is just in the same state of mind as Saint Appar on his way to see Lord Shiva in Kailas; Sri Ramakrishna who even tried to kill himself weeping for his Divine Mother Kali; Sri Chaitanya who became mad for Sri Krishna; Sita who when imprisoned in Lanka (Ceylon) was longing for Sri Rama and Bharata who searched for Sri Rama in the forest. Sometimes even some more lives *(Janmas)* may pass in this state of pangs of separation!

However much, one is able to get the company of one of the names and forms of God, that cannot be the state of permanent attainment of God; soon or later that name and form will have to vanish.

> "... realizing one's own truth in the truth of that True Thing (the Supreme) and being one with It, having been resolved into It, is the true Seeing (realization). Thus should you know".
>
> – 'Ulladu Narpadu' – Verse 8.

Realising the oneness of one's own Self as the true nature of God and to merge into It without any residue of individuality, alone is the true seeing and the true attainment of God. Is it not? Therefore, his (the devotee's) Beloved God, the Supreme, wishes to give him undeceivingly that State, the one Thing which is the simultaneous completion of all his efforts

and the fulfillment of all the desires. How to bestow this upon him?

" Just as a wild deer is decoyed with a tamed one..."

– Thayumnavar.

One who wants to catch the wild deer takes the tamed one with him to the forest, as well as one who wants to catch a wild elephant takes the tamed one with him to the forest. Unless the wild deer or elephant sees its own kind, it will not come out freely. Likewise, knowing that it will be difficult to make the Man realize the Truth, unless He, the Supreme is born within the womb of a mother, with all the limitations of a human body just as the Man is, and has inherent in him the bond- relationship of Master-disciple (*Guru-sishya*) built within the temple (the body). This is the Guru-incarnation.

It is typical when the Supreme takes a body on earth as the Guru-incarnation, that everything is planned for the Man as well as for others who are mature enough and longing after God like him, to be born in such places and circumstances, either near or far from the Guru, but that will give them the opportunity to meet the Guru and associate with Him. As we have presented for the sake of convenience the whole humanity as the Man, the whole Vedas as the Teacher and Sri Krishna as the one Beloved God out of the different names and forms of God, at this point when the Man is meeting his Guru, let us present his Guru as Sri Ramana.

"Why are you so sorry? What happened to you?" When asked by Lord Vittal, Namdev replied, "That

a potter tried to sound my head with his wooden stick; I prevented him; so he insulted me by calling me 'an unbaked claypot'!"

"Did he sound others' head also?"

"Yes, he did; they did not object; but is it proper that he should have done so on my head also? Am I not your great devotee? And so, am I not loved by you?"

"This is where you are wrong! Your ego, by thinking thus, 'I am God's devotee; my devotion is great; I am God's beloved', grows and expands. Since it was my responsibility to return love for love, it was not possible for me to correct you and teach you the True Knowledge. Thus, you were petted and spoilt by me. Just as parents send their children to others for learning, now I have to send you to your Guru to acquire humility and Knowledge. Till then, you certainly are an 'unbaked claypot'!" Thus was the verdict of Lord Vittal of Pandarpur, Namdev's Beloved God.

"What! Is there one greater than You, called the Guru?"

"Yes, the baking of the clay pot i.e., acquiring Self-Knowledge cannot be done through me, I am your Beloved God, who is like a father and mother to you. It can only be done by Guru. Your Guru is there, living in a dilapidated temple in the nearby forest. Go to Him"

Because Namdev had been put to shame in the assembly of Sages as well as by Lord Vittal, he felt very anxious that he must acquire the True knowledge

at all cost. So he left his Beloved God and entered the forest. As he approached the dilapidated temple, he saw an old man lying there with his legs stretched out on the *Shivalingam*. Taken aback by the sight which in his view was sacrilegious, he thought: "Lord Vittal informed me that this old man is the Guru who is to teach me the Supreme Knowledge; but, it seems that he does not even know this simple truth, that no one should stretch out one's legs on to *Shivalingam*." So he went near.

"Come near; are you not the one sent by Vittal?" said the old man! On hearing this, Namdev though was baffled, replied abruptly: "Swami, you seem to have the knowledge of past, present and future, how is it then, that you do not seem to know that you should not stretch out your legs on the *Shivalingam?*"

No matter how great is the devotion, a mind without humility is unfit to meet the Guru or to reap the real fruit of meeting Him. Has it not been seen more than once* in the presence of Sri Ramana

* (1) Once a devotee, a social reformer, complained to Sri, Bhagavan Ramana that equality was not observed in the Ashram dining hall. Sri Bhagavan replied, "When you have come to this place in order to get peace of mind, attend to that only". The devotee retorted, "I would like to bring equality to the whole world" Sri Bhagavan then remarked humorously, "If you can do so, it is good" Then, when the whole world is reformed, will not this place be also reformed since it is also in the world?" But the devotee continued adamantly, "I want to start my service now from this very place!" At this point Sri Bhagavan exclaimed, "Ah, what a pity! Why do you disturb your mind so much unnecessarily?" and graciously advised, "Go to sleep; there only all are equal !" Thus He gave his words of grace of profound significance.

Bhagavan that, some of those who came to be taught, actually began to teach Sri Bhagavan and some of those who came to serve Him, and began to boss over Him? An immature mind can behave towards the Guru only in this way! It will even try to find fault with His (the Guru) daily activities and set them right, just as Namdev did. Since it is the Supreme Himself who has now come in a human form as the Guru, He does not mind, either the ignorant criticism of the devotees or their glorifying ecstasies (eulogizes). In the same manner this old man replies with great patience to the question of Namdev: "Is it so my child? Are my legs on the Lingam? You see, because I am so old I cannot see where my legs are. There are no sensations in my legs; I am not able to move them; so please, remove them and place them where there is

(Foot note continued from page 96)

(2) Once Sri Bhagavan Ramana mentioned humorously, "Those who come here do a great deal of teaching to me. So I learn so many things from them." He then narrated, "Coming here at first some show their love to their Bhagavan. They sing and dance in ecstasy and declare, 'O Bhagavan, let me be your slave', and start their service. Very soon their devotion grows to such an extent that they make a great deal of fuss about my diet telling me: 'That food is good for your health, and that is not'.

After a month or two, when some newcomers arrive, as they themselves were once, come and present me some eatables, because of their great love for me, they (the prior) put some conditions to my taking them. Should I take a little anyway to please the giver, they condemn? Why 'This is not good; this is not to be taken'. When another few months have passed, I become afraid to disobey them, since their advice is due to their great love for me. Then as usual, they become my masters and I their slave. If one is a Swami one should not contradict others. What Swamihood is, can only be experienced when one is a Swami !"

no *Lingam*". As Namdev believed that the Guru had accepted the rebuke, he at once happily grasped the feet of the old man and placed them where there was no *Lingam*. What a wonder! A *Lingam* sprouted under the feet of the old man. No matter how often and where the legs were placed, a *Lingam* would sprout under them! Perhaps, Namdev's mind was mature enough through his association with Lord Vittal, in all other aspects, except in humility, it was waiting only for the touch of the Philosopher's Stone *(Sparsa Vedi)*. As soon as he had this chance of touching his Guru's Feet so many times, his heart awakened. Since he couldn't find any unholy place to rest the Feet of his Guru, he came to the conclusion that his very head, was the only unholy place. Thus, reaching the pinnacle of humility, he placed the Feet of his Guru on his own head! What is to happen now? Namdev became a *Shivalingam* that is, he realises the non-dual Truth, the Self - *Shiva*.

It is to be noted here that, though Namdev recognised that every space (for second and third persons) are a place for the *Shivalingam*; the True Knowledge did not blossom in him, until his attention was drawn to his own SELF, the first person, by the action of placing the Feet on his own head. Only then the Truth was realised. This clearly proves the 'teaching of Sri Bhagavan Ramana that, unless one experiences one's Self, the knowledge that everything is *Brahman* cannot be perfect and true; although one accepts that everything is *Brahman* and tries to see the world as such; it will be only an imagination.

> "...when the first person (ego) ceases to be, through enquiry into the truth of the first person, the second and third persons come to an end. That state of Being in which all (I, II and III persons) shine as one, is the true nature of the Self"
>
> –Ulladu Narpadu, - Verse 14.

Namdev now having the True Knowledge went home. After some days Lord Vittal Himself came to his house and asked, "Why don't you come to see me now-a-days?" Namdev replied, "O Lord, why this test on me still? Where am I now? As You alone are, I am not! Then, where and when am I not with you?" "Now this clay pot is baked!" Thus exclaimed Lord Vittal and vanished.

Is it not clear from this story that even the love of the Beloved God has a limit and that the beloved God has to send His devotee to a Guru to acquire the Supreme Knowledge? Let us now turn to our Man.

His Beloved God, for whom the Man is pityfully searching for and wandering about, takes a human form in Tiruchuli, a village which is somewhere in a remote corner of this vast world; born as a child of a certain couple called Sundaram Iyer and Alagammal. As this is the Supreme Thing that now takes a human body, only with the purpose of graciously teaching the True Knowledge to the world, under the pretence that the fear of death has to overcome Him, and that He was engaged in Self-enquiry; thus giving room to others to write His life history, and to interpret this as the cause of His realization; yet shining ever as He was, IS and will be – He came to Arunachala, which is nothing but

a magnified gross form *(Vishvaroopa)* of the human form, under the cover of which the Supreme Thing is now acting, and awaiting for our Man.

Some friends came to see our Man who (according to us is studying in the III[rd] standard (b) of the School), now has the perfect maturity for desiring only his Beloved God, and is shouting, "Krishna, Krishna", they advised him: "You are panting for your Beloved God; don't you know that it is said by Sages that without a Guru one cannot obtain God? Listen, in Tiruvannamalai there is one Ramana who is glorified by many as a Realized Sage, the embodiment of Love; why don't you go to Him and pray to Him to help you to get back your Beloved God"?.

"Is it so? Then let me go and see Him", so saying the Man went to meet his Guru.

A human form is sitting in front of him. That form, although overbrimming with love even for the wicked, seems to be indifferent to the many that come and go. Though, like a magnet It attracted the Man and brought him into His presence, His face exposes no outward signs of such Grace, as neither like nor dislike, rather it is like a mere witness. With such a display of disguise the Guru appears to the Man. But what is it that is sitting in front of him? It is his Beloved God, a magnetic hill of Love that attracts the soul, whom he had been worshipping all these days with pure Love, and for whom he has come after renouncing everything – body, relatives and world, as if they were mere straw; is it not? Though outwardly a human form, is it not his Beloved God that now draws him

so? The Man fell at His Feet and stood up again. This attraction that he now feels towards this human form, is not due to a previous acquaintance with it, but to the unbroken link with Him throughout so many lives.

After his first meeting with Sri Ramakrishna it became impossible for Narendra to remain without seeing Him, at least once a week. What attracted Narendra an educated youth who lived in Calcutta, a city full of so many attractive things, towards Sri Ramakrishna who had neither education, nor he had handsome appearance or wealth, but looked like an old man and acted like a mad man to do and see? It is worth noting here what Swami Vivekananda (Narendra) once said about the great power of attraction of his Guru, "No matter how much I tried to control my mind through the reasoning of my educated intellect, it would fly to Him". Our Man whose heart also had been stolen away by the Guru, laments to Bhagavan Ramana: "I worshipped Sri Krishna and had His *darshan*. To Him who appeared to me whenever I called, I was so foolish to ask only for worldly objects until one day, through His Grace, I understood my foolishness. From that day I wanted to love Him only for the sake of love and I let Him know that I no longer desired any of the things in any of the worlds, 'You alone are my need!'. But, after praying thus to Him, alas, from that day He disappeared never to appear again, no matter how much I cried, tried and panted for Him. Graciously bless me, so that I may have Him for ever. I heard from elders that God, the eternal Reality can be obtained only with the help of a Guru; so I have now come to You. Do help me!"

Guru :- What! Did your God disappear? If He is the eternal Reality, how can He disappear? And if, as you have said, His form disappeared, how can it be the eternal Reality?

Man :- O Bhagavan, I am saying only the truth! Truly He appeared before me and gave me His holy company, and truly He disappeared. Please do not doubt me.

Guru :- Yes, what you say is correct. His appearing to you was as real as His disappearing; but 'appearing-disappearing', that is not the real nature of Truth. Whatever comes is bound to go. If it is said that something has come or appeared, it means that it was not there before, and, if it is said that it has gone or disappeared, it means that it is not there after. Then, how can that thing which has a coming and going and exists only within a particular time and a particular space, be God, **the Thing Eternal**, unbound by time and space? You have asked me to help you to attain the Reality which ever exists. It is for you now to discriminate and come to the right conclusion, as to what is that Reality. Then only my help for you to attain that, will be worthy. It is useless to help you to obtain again the same God with a name and form which once appears only to disappear. You must determine and tell me exactly what you really want. I will even give you hints to help you to find out what is your aim.

Man :- Then, what is the definition of Reality?

Guru :- **Eternal – unchanging – self-shining.** That which is in all places and at all times without appearing and disappearing, is the Reality; that which never grows – changes the form – or decays is the Reality; that which shines without the need of any other thing is the Reality. That alone is SAT. Now, find out for yourself the thing which satisfies those three conditions and tell me.

Man :- The whole universe which I see is definitely bound by time and space undergoing changes and liable to destruction. If so, everything in the whole universe (sun, moon and stars etc,) is proved to be false. Even my Beloved God, since He appeared and disappeared, does not satisfy the definition of Sat, the Reality. How can I then find out a thing which fulfils the conditions of Reality?

Guru :- Why don't you look whether you, the one who is enquiring about all the things, that would satisfy the definition of Truth, are not satisfying these definitions? Who are you?

Man :- I too was born, grew up, will become old, will die and disappear one day. Even I, am subject to change and destruction.

Guru :- What do you mean? Were you born? What was born; the body or you? Is it not the body that was born, grew up, will die and disappear? Are you the body?

Man :- But... my body dies!

Guru :- If the body that dies is your possession, who are you, the possessor?

Man :- Yes, I, the possessor have to be different from the body. I, who am able of thinking and knowing the body and other things, am definitely other than the body.

Guru :- What do you mean? Again, are you the thinking mind? Is not your mind the form of your thoughts?

Man :- Yes, my mind thinks; are these thoughts the mind?

Guru :- Remove all thoughts and see. There is no such thing as mind. **The very form of mind is thoughts alone!**

Man :- When there is no thought, there is nothing! Then, what is there as the Real Thing?

Guru :- You, the knower of your thoughts – the mind, are you not other than the mind? Is not the mind which is known by you, your possession? If so, find out who you – the possessor of the mind – are and what?

Man :- In the absence of mind there is nothing to be known; but only to be aware that there is no thought.

Guru :- Were you not aware of the movements of your thoughts? Now, in the same way are you not aware of their subsidence too?

Man :- Yes, even the thoughtless, darkness... like nothingness is known to me.

Guru:- Do not both the states of thoughts and no thoughts appear and disappear? Therefore, how can they satisfy the definition of Reality? See, whether you, who thus know, 'This is manyness – this is nothingness (state of thoughts and state of no-thought)' are satisfying the definition of Reality or not.

See, you were (once) a young child, but now the form of your body is changed. The contents of your then mind are also now changed. But even in the midst of these changes of body and mind, are you not the same who remained unchanged up to now? Has this YOU undergone any change?

Man:- No. I am the same 'I' ; I am not an other. Yet, did this 'I' exist before the birth of the body? Will this 'I' exist even after the death of the body! Who am I?

Guru :- Why do you think so far ahead'? What do you become in your sleep? Were you there or were you not there?

Man :- I, who am not the body and mind, ought to be there in sleep; but I am not aware of my existence there!

Guru :- What were you not aware of there? There you were not aware only of your body, mind and the world. Was your existence itself not experienced by you? **Accepting your existence in sleep is indeed knowing yourself also; for, Existence and Knowledge are not different**; they are one and the

same. When you wake up, do you not remember the nature of your existence exactly as it was in sleep i.e., "I slept happily well and I had not even a dream there". Is not your statement, made after you wake up, your knowledge of the experience of your existence in sleep? Are not those two experiences, "I slept well; I had not even a dream there" betraying that you had the knowledge of your existence there? As the present waking state, which is merely a state full of thoughts – body, mind and world, represents 'Manyness' *(Sakala – Vyakta)* and the sleep which is devoid of body, mind and world represents the 'Nothingness' *(Kevala – Avyakta)*, here and now you are able to scrutinize and understand the nature of birth and death. Therefore, the state in which you were before the birth of the body and will be after its death, should be clearly known to you. Since, you are now able to understand that you are existing as other than the mind and body in sleep and waking, then you can also understand that you must be existing as other than mind and body, even in the present life itself as well as in both before the birth of the body and after the death (which is nothing but a state before birth) of the body.

Moreover, other than you, aids such as light, senses and mind are required to know the world; but

what other aids than yourself do you need to be aware of your existence in sleep where there is no body, senses and mind? Nothing! To know your existence you need no other aids.

Master :- Which is the light for you?

Disciple :- For me by day it is the sun; in the dark by night a lamp.

Master :- What is the light that sees the light?

Disciple :- The eye.

Master :- What is the light that knows it (the eye)?

Disciple :- The light is the mind.

Master :- What is the light that knows the mind?

Disciple :- It is I.

Master :- Therefore, you are the Supreme Light to lights. (When the master instructed him thus) the disciple realised 'THAT, verily I AM'."

–'Ulladu Narpadu-Supplement' -Verse 7.

Now, thus enquire into your own nature which satisfies all the definitions of the Reality.

Man :- Yes, I have to come to the conclusion that I am that Reality. Then, who was my Beloved God who was giving me (His Vision *Darshan*) whatever I wanted all these years, and whom I love more than my life? Who is He? Was His compassion towards me and all my sincere devotion for Him, mere false feelings and were they in vain? Be gracious to me and remove even this confusion of mine.

Guru :- Should there be a thing called 'Love' other than you, that thing would impair the oneness of Reality. Therefore YOU indeed are LOVE. Unless you are Love itself, can Love be another existing thing? **The knowing of your Self (Sat) is spontaneously ever present, because you are Knowledge itself. So also, even any feeling of love in you cannot be but you, because you are Love itself.**

Man :- A while ago, You graciously explained me how I have the constant experience that I am Knowledge itself. Will you now graciously explain me how I have the constant experience that I am Love also?

Guru :- Just as, by little scrutinising you were proved that you have the experience that YOU (*Sat*) are Knowledge (*Chit*) Itself, little enquiry will prove that you have the experience that YOU are LOVE (*Ananda*) also.

Man :- How shall I proceed?

Guru :- For the love of what did you come here? Is it not for the love of your Beloved God? Why were you loving Him? Is it not because He was giving you whatever you wanted? Suppose, He had been giving only to others and not to you, would you have come here for Him?

Man :- Though it may have been so, now, I love my Beloved God for the sake of His love only. Is this also selfishness?

Guru :- You are now praying to Him, as if you have no selfishness, that He should not give you anything except that He should appear before you and be with you. Suppose, you came to know that He has been giving His *Darshan* to all others, but has decided not to appear ever before you; would YOU still love Him? Thus it means that you are really loving (having devotion for) "your" Self, the target towards which the love of your Beloved God is expected to turn. This is why the Vedas proclaim, "It is for the sake of the Self (*Atman*) that everything is dear...". So, Self is the dearest of all.

Man :- How strange this is! I have to came to the conclusion after deep reflection that all my love, including my love towards my Beloved God is self-centered!* That is all very well. But, how then to account for such a disinterested love shown towards me by my Beloved God?

Guru :- **Although He has nothing to gain from you, towards whom was His love ? Was it not towards you? You, being the target of love from both points – you and your Beloved God – alone are aimed at. Is it not clear to you then that the perfect form of Love is YOU alone?***Just as you have found out previously that you are the Knowledge

* For a more elaborate explanation please read The Path of Shri Ramana-Part-I

that knows your existence, so now, you are able to understand that the spontaneous form of Love (both your Beloved God and you) that loves you, is YOU alone. Thus YOU, the **Sat-Chit** are found to be the **Ananda** also or in other words, **knowing YOU as Sat-Chit itself is the attainment of Supreme Bliss.** Even obtaining for ever your Beloved God in His full real aspects *Sat-Chit-Ananda* after deleting the unreal aspects, name and form is, THIS alone. Know IT; experience IT and be IT.

"Even though one may worship the Supreme in whatever form, giving (Him) whatever name, and even though it is the way to see the Supreme in that name and form, realising one's own Truth in the truth of that True Thing (the Supreme), and being one with It having been resolved into It, is the only true seeing. Thus should you know."

-'Ulladu Narpadu' - Verse 8*

On hearing this the Man was filled with sacred awe, his hair standing on end and his heart over brimming with love for his Guru, he fell at His Feet!

The Man went back home. For some time, day and night he reflected deeply on the non-dual instruction *(Advaita Upadesha)* which he had received from his Guru :- "Who possibly can be my Guru other than my Beloved God who, thus made me turn towards the Supreme Reality? It is my Beloved God who, all these years has showered on me so much love

*Refer appendix 4. (b)

and care. But, now I understand that many times more than, my Beloved God who gave me all the worldly objects which I asked for, it is my *Sad-Guru* who, by leading me through the true Path and really giving me a great good, is the only Supreme Truth that I should obtain. Did I not ask my Beloved God the boon that, He alone should be my need? It seems as if the boon has now been granted. His incarnating Himself as my *Sad-Guru* is the only way for giving Himself to me. Truly now, my *Sad-Guru* who lives just like me and is there day and night, unlike my Beloved God Krishna who sometimes appeared and sometimes disappeared, alone is the Beloved God! To reach His Feet indeed is the boon I asked for! Why should I then remain here any longer?"

The Love for Guru *(Guru Bhakti)* having now blossomed in him, the Man leaving everything behind returns to his Guru never to leave Him again. Thus his love towards his Beloved God, having ripened into the Love for the Guru *(Guru Bhakti)*, the Man has been promoted to the IVth standard in our School! This *Guru Bhakti* (**in the IVth standard**) is the climax of all dualistic love (*dvaita bhakti*). No other form of love (*bhakti*) excels this.

> "Guru is Brahma; Guru is Vishnu; and Guru is Maheshwara. Verily Guru is the Supreme Brahman. To Him (Guru) be my obeisance."

When such a *Guru Bhakti* blossoms in one's heart, one's pilgrimage towards the "Goal-Supreme" becomes similar to that of the rain drop that falls into the flowing Ganges mentioned earlier. Obtaining a real Guru and generating within oneself a real *Guru Bhakti*

takes place only in the IVth standard of our School, where the feeling of love is being purified. As soon as the Man understands that, being with his Guru is the same as getting his Beloved God and being with Him, his desire to get his Beloved God and be with Him fades away. Because of the discrimination (***Viveka***) which annihilated all his desires for worldly objects the Man now, is sitting at his Guru's Feet enjoying the Bliss (*Ananda*) of being fully satisfied in the presence of his Guru (i.e., in the state of ***Viveka-Ananda***).

Since, *Guru Bhakti* is thus found to be the highest of all dualistic love, let us now scrutinise and find out the nature of the *Guru Bhakti* that we think we have. When the primitive man joined the 1st standard of our School, his Teacher, the *Vedas* was his Guru and the love he had towards Him was also a *guru bhakti*. Was it not? As we have mentioned for the convenience of our exposition that the *Vedas* was the Teacher and the whole of humanity was the Man, let us see how it actually works out in practice. Are there not scholars and pandits each one of whom has mastered some portions of the innumerable items of the *Karma Kanda* in the *Vedas?* From them only, can humanity obtain instructions and everyone of them is a Guru in his particular branch of learning in *Karma Kanda*. So the gurus for the 1st standard of our School are many and many are the disciples of each one of them. Thus in humanity there are so many gurus teaching ritualistic actions *(Karmas)* to so many groups of disciples like our Man when he was in the 1st standard. Such gurus and disciples of the 1st standard have been, are and will be found in our midst. No wonder then that each

disciple in the group of every guru, sincerely claims that his guru is the highest *Sad-Guru!* We can now understand the difference between the *guru bhakti* of those disciples and the *Guru Bhakti* of our Man who now is in the IVth standard. The difference indeed is like that between the valley and the mountain.

Just as people of the 1st standard have so many gurus to fulfil their desires for worldly objects *(vishaya-bhakti)*, there are many in our midst who, belonging to the IInd standard, have innumerable gurus also to fulfil their desires for worldly objects (*vishaya-bhakti*) through the worship of different names and forms of God. As mentioned in page 80, those whose progress was stopped and retarded in IIIrd (a) standard of our School, because of their desires for worldly objects and *siddhis* as well as for name and fame, in spite of the fact that they were able to see their Beloved God in name and form, are taken to be great God-realised souls by those who are in the IInd standard of our School, and who wish to learn the methods of worships. They also name their love towards their gurus as *'guru bhakti'* and they proclaim, "My Guru so and so alone is the *Mahatma* who has seen God. He is God! He is God in flesh and blood. He is a *Maharshi*; go to Him; all your aims will be fulfilled". Since there are crores of students in the IInd standard of our School and since every student needs to worship so many names and forms of God to fulfil their different desires; then certainly, crores of gurus have to be there for the IInd standard students! Is it not so?

Do we not see people around us, not only unlearned but even having academic degree and men

of high positions who are flocking around so many such gurus, saying: "There is a *Mahatma* in that town who has achieved a great deal in his worship of Goddess Lakshmi. If we go to him, we will get wealth and fame". "Here in our village there is a great *Swami* who has vision of Goddess Parvati. He gives us the sacred offerings *(Prasad)* which fulfil all our desires."....... "On the nearby hill temple there is a Saint through whom Lord Subrahmanya speaks. If he gives someone some sacred ashes *(vibhuti)*, miraculous things happen". Thus in the Ist and the IInd standard of our School, our Teacher, the *Vedas*, instructs through so many assistants!

Since the aspirant in IIIrd standard (a) is able to enjoy the association with his Beloved God on account of his one-pointed love, there is no need for him to go to anyone or even to the Teacher (the *Vedas*) who promoted him to IIIrd standard (a); for, what are the *Vedas* if not his Beloved God who is fulfilling all his desires for worldly objects? Visiting names and forms of God other than his Beloved God and going to several such gurus as mentioned above cannot find place in his nature, simply because of his one-pointed love.

Sometimes, strangely enough, some aspirants having the high qualifications for the refined *Guru Bhakti* as those of the Man in the IVth standard, i.e., Love for God only and complete dispassion towards worldly objects, will be advised by such disciples of the aforesaid gurus to visit their masters. But very soon the Supreme Grace will make him give up the surroundings for his own good. When Buddha was

wandering in the forest in search of the Truth after having renounced everything, he had to come under some such gurus, fit only for the 1^{st} and II^{nd} standards students in our School. But, very soon finding their help to be in vain He quitted them. In front of the glowing fire of the longing for Knowledge (*Jnana*) in the aspirant who is in III^{rd} standard (b) of our School, it is no wonder that such gurus reveal themselves of no help. It is worth to note here, that Sri Ramakrishna simply had to put an end to his discipleship with the Yogini Bhairavi Brahmani. **Sometimes such gurus may also accuse the aspirant, (who is no longer interested in them, and advancing at great speed towards the IV^{th} standard) of lacking devotion and of being disloyal to guru (*guru-drohi*) as well as ungrateful**. But he, the best among aspirants presses forward towards his aim. Where is the time for him, in the flood of his intense yearning for the Supreme Truth, to repent over the days wasted with those gurus or to feel hate or disregard towards them? He goes ahead forgetting them!

Taking into consideration the disappointments and waste of time of those aspirants who, while progressing from III^{rd} standard (b) to IV^{th} standard of our School, meet one after the other, gurus fit to instruct the lower standards only, some may think it necessary to instruct those aspirants, "Master-disciple, (*Guru-sishya*) relationship is unnecessary; the old belief of a Guru giving enlightenment is not desirable". **The truth behind such statements is that a highly mature soul who is qualified for the IV^{th} standard of our School need not go to any of the aforesaid gurus; for by Grace, in time, he will be made to meet the *Sad-Guru*.**

Yet, those who give such advice, do they not play the part of 'Gurus', in the sense that they give the mature aspirants such good warnings and save them from going in the wrong direction? Though it is true, that some earnest aspirants are disappointed by some mere orators in philosophy and by the bustle of others, who are able to obtain worldly objects through the strength of the worship - i.e., who are in the IIIrd standard (a), and who like to think of themselves as great gurus; it is dangerous to conclude that a Guru is definitely unnecessary. It is only regarding to that, Sri Ramakrishna said, "When a small water-snake catches a big frog both will suffer, as the snake cannot swallow the frog and the frog cannot escape from the snake".

Sometimes also, strangely enough, many having only love for worldly objects *(vishaya-bhakti)* who being in I, II and III (a) standard of our School, may come in the divine presence of the real *Sad-Guru* who is waiting for the students qualified for IV standard. Though, on account of good *Prarabdha*, they (the former) happen to come in the presence of that great *Sad-Guru* who is ever shining as the Supreme *Brahman* now in human form, they take Him merely as a means to fulfil their love for worldly objects *(vishaya bhakti)*; therefore, their love towards Him cannot be called *Guru Bhakti.*

> "May I be happy in this world and the next. May I possess desirable objects. May I desire to possess them. Let my desires be fulfilled... ...Let me possess a suitable place of residence. May I acquire fame. May I be lucky. May I acquire wealth. May

I have the ability to protect my possessions... ...May I be honored by others. May I perform religious works like sacrifices and enjoy their fruits... ...May I live long."

– *'Chamakam'* - Section III.

"May I have food in plenty... May I have milk, cream, ghee and honey in plenty. May I have opportunities to eat and drink with my relatives...... May my trees and plants grow well May I posses gold, precious stones, pearls etc., in plenty. May I be strong physically.

– *'Chamakam'* - Section IV.

"Let the wealth already acquired by me as well as that which may be acquired hereafter be secure. May I and my sons and relatives be prosperous. May I possess movable and immovable properties. May I gain the reward of my acts."

– *'Chamakam'* - Section V.

Thus they pray to the *Sad-Guru.*

Of all the fruits in an orchard the crow will peck only the small and bitter neem! Though the *Sad-Guru* is without desire, purpose and effort, His mere Presence itself, like the Divine Wish-yielding Tree, never fails to fulfil their desires. They not only pray for the fulfilment of their desires, but they also want the *Sad-Guru* to give them initiation into *Karmas, Mantras* and methods of worship, all things necessary only for the I, II and III (a) standard of our School. In spite of the fact that the *Sad-Guru* has come only with the purpose of teaching Devotion to the Self *(Swatma-Bhakti)*, the highest and most refined Love of all, to those who are in the IV[th] standard of our School,

sometimes, He, out of compassion for others (who pray for worldly objects), will come down to their level and help them by recommending some **ritualistic actions (Karmas)** for those in the 1st standard, some **Mantras and Chakras** for those in the IInd standard and some prayers **(Stotras)** and divine names ***(Japas)*** for those in, the IIIrd (a) standard according to their requests and tastes. If a mother gives some kind of food to her children and some other kind to the older members of the family according to the power of assimilation, it is no wonder that the *Sad-Guru* helps those who come to Him merely for the attainment of worldly objects. Is it not a privilege for those students of the I, II and III (a) standard of our School to be taught by the *Sad-Guru* Himself, this Supreme, rather than being taught by mere pandits and scholars in *Vedas*? It is the habit of these who are in a standard below IIIrd (b) and who come to a *Sad-Guru*, to view such instructions given as *Karmas, Mantras, Chakras, Japas* etc., as the main teachings of the *Sad-Guru* and also to propagate them as such. Yes, they are the main and only teachings of the *Sad-Guru* **for them, but for them only!!** Therefore, it is the duty of the aspirants who are in the IVth standard of our School to find out what the main teachings of the *Sad-Guru* really are and to practise them.

None of the gurus from Ist standard to IIIrd (a) standard of our school are Knowers of the Self *(Atma-Jnanis)*. Hence, they have the sense of reality towards (the names and forms of) the world and hence they desire the happiness of this world and the next and also name and fame, i.e., to be glorified by people as

the greatest gurus. Consequently, they expect their disciples to be always satisfied, loyal and obedient to them. They do not like their disciples to progress further, from the dual love, *(guru bhakti)* towards the Love for the Self *(Swatma Bhakti)*, and to enjoy the non-dual Bliss *(Advaita-Ananda)*. As they themselves do not have the Supreme Knowledge, they, become envious of It.

But, as the real Guru is nothing but the Supreme *Brahman*, He does not allow the disciple to enjoy the dual love towards Him. He points out to the disciple that he should not rest contented with such dual love. He never allows him to be contented with his present quietness until he experiences the spontaneous non-dual Self *(Sahajatma-Anubhava)*.

Now let us return to our Man. He is happy and calm at his Guru's Feet like the rain water is stilled in a big lake. But his Guru Ramana will not allow him to remain contented in such kind of happiness.

> The Man sings :- "I know no other God than Ramana, Who, to me as how to proceed further on the Path, never said anything else but : 'Except the Path of going towards one's Self, there is no better way; this is the only Path without defects'."
>
> –'Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai' - Verse 533

> "O my Beloved God, You came on earth in a human form having the name of Ramana, O Sun of Knowledge *(Jnana Bhanu)*, O Ocean of Bliss who, just like the Holy Hill (Arunachala), is bestowing Grace upon Thy devotees whose hearts

are melting with love for Thee, call me to Thee and let me drink from Thee !"

–'Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai' - Verse 218

"Like a dog I was roaming about the streets. Oh Ramana, Thou hast saved me! Oh my Beloved God who hast become my Guru and who hast given me the Path (of Self-enquiry) upon which I cannot be deluded by Maya. Oh Ramana, I will no longer visit the temple of any other God."

–'Sri Ramana Sannidhi Murai' - Verse 544

Turning towards the Man who is contented and thus happily singing in praise of Him as if he had attained what he aspired for, the *Sad-Guru* asks:- "Have you attained your Beloved God?".

The Man:-"Oh my Lord, who hast taken me as Thy own, hast protected me throughout so many past births and, Thyself hast now come out from within me as my Guru to instruct me...."

–'Kaivalyam' - Chapter I - Verse 79.

Yes, my Lord, I have! You are my Beloved God!!

Guru :- What was the boon that you asked from your Beloved God?

Man :- After having the clear understanding, the only boon I asked from Him was : 'Give me You alone; for, I want nothing else'.

Guru :- Has it been fulfilled?

Man :- Yes, that which I asked for, was You, my Lord, who are in front of me! So, I have what I asked for!

Guru :- What is in front of you is this (pointing out to His body). Is this what you have asked for?

Man :- It is really You, my *Sad-Guru*, whom I was longing for.

Guru :- Am I this? Do you believe that I am this body? If so, how can this form be a better one than the form of your Beloved God? (Krishna) For, that form appeared and after a while disappeared. In the same way this form also will live with you for some time, then die and disappear! Will it not? In what way then, is this name and form superior to that name and form? If, what you took as the aim to be attained is this name and form, one day or other your desire will be proved of no use. So, at least now you should decide, as you were instructed before, as to what your aim really is.

Man :- You alone revealed to me the great Truth that : "I am the Supreme Thing". My Beloved God, did not! Since You alone have taught me the highest principle and not He, I feel, that your love towards me in taking care of my real need is greater than the love of my Beloved God, who only gave me what I asked for. You and the Truth, You have shown me are one and the same; such is my conclusion.

Guru :- If I am That, does it profit you? Praising me as God or Guru or that Supreme Truth, is that the whole of your aim? If I am that Supreme Truth, what about you?* Who are you then? Is not your attaining Me, the Supreme Truth, the same as your knowing that yourself are the Supreme Truth?

Man :- Is not taking hold of the Divine Feet of my *Sad-Guru* the only way to reach the Supreme State of Truth? (So saying the Man falls at the Feet of his Guru and takes hold of them.) Are these the Feet of your Guru? (Pointing out to His body). Is this your *Sad-Guru?* Again and again you are making the same mistake. Here (pointing out to the Man's body), your *Sad-Guru* is within you. **The Self-awareness eternally shining and ever directly experienced as 'I-I' within you, is the real Feet of your *Sad-Guru*. Cling to it. That alone will lead you to the goal.**

Man :- Only through Your words which come from outside, do I know this great Truth. So, my Lord, let me be blessed by prostrating to You. worshipping You and receiving Your Prasad.

Guru :- "The true form of prostration (Namaskaram) to the Guru is to remain in the Supreme Silence where, the sense of differentiation, Master-disciple, God-man, cannot rise through the delusion born of the ignorant ego."

–'Guru Vachaka Kovai'-Verse 310

* What is the use of praying me Swami. You should become Swami - said Bhagawan to the author.

"The dissolving of the ice - the ego sense 'I am the body' into the ocean – the Guru-Awareness – that is the same as the oneness of Self-Awareness, is the true worship of the Guru."

– 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 315

"Though one worships with all kinds of items one's Guru, who is none else than Shiva in human form, merging into Him who is the Life of one's life and thus losing one's individuality, is the true worship of the Guru."

– 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 309

"After submitting oneself – the ego, as a prey to the Guru who is the source of the Silence of Perfection, experiencing what remains in the heart - Awareness, is receiving the consecrated food (*prasad*) from the Guru."

– 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 302

"When we worship any God other than Self, we are bestowed upon only everything but the Self. Other than the Supreme Self, which insignificant God can bestow upon us to live the life of the Shiva's State, the eternal Awareness of the Self?"

– 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 1071

Therefore, you must understand that diving deep within in quest of the Self ('I' – the Reality) is the only true way of worshipping your Guru.

"Only when you know your Self, no harm can befall you...."

-'Kaivalyam' - Chapter I - Verse 13.

On the other hand though you are able to attain your God or Guru in name and form ever so many times they will ultimately vanish.

"It is only to those who are not able to know themselves as the witness, to whatever is cognized in the waking state as well as to the ignorance in sleep, that are deluded in thinking that God appeared to them and afterwards disappeared."

– 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 1072

"Only those who do not know the Self, the eternal Truth as 'I', but merely know the transitory body as 'I', will see enthusiastically, for a short while, the different names and farms of God and wonder at them."

- G.V.K. - Verse 1070

"All the manifestations of God that are obtained through worship, appear and disappear. Therefore, Self, one's true Nature, shining ever, without appearing and disappearing, alone is the True God."

– 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 1073

Man :- If so, am I to forget even You, my Guru and dive within to know my Self? This does not seem to be proper!

Guru :- What is it that you call your Guru? So long as you think that you are the body; you mistake also your Guru to be the body. This is quite contrary to what He really is and to what He really taught to you. That alone is improper.

"Self alone is the Thing greatest. More than Self there is no greater thing. Therefore, by no means can we find a thing that can be bartered for the Self."

- 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 1060

He alone truly knows me who knows me as I myself know me.

"Those who do not understand that the *Jnana-Guru* is the formless Supreme Space though he appears in the human form, are the vilest of all criminals."

– 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 274

Man :- I know that the form of my Guru is the same as the form of my Self and the form of my Beloved God. I take it to be a rare privilege that I should have such a Guru in front of me! How then can I abandon Him?

Guru :- The Guru is outside you as well as within you. The Guru outside as He is creating favourable surroundings for you to dive within and know your true nature, pushes you in from the outside, while the Guru inside pulls you from within and keeps you in the heart not allowing you to escape out.

Man :- If so, I feel it is not wrong to cling to You, the outside form of my Guru.

Guru :- It is wrong! Is not the form of the Guru outside having an appearance and disappearance? So, it is not permanent. **Guru is the Self. Attaining the Self alone is to attain God or**

Guru. On the other hand, **so long as you see your God or Guru as different from your Self, you cannot know the Self which is the state of Perfect Freedom. So long as there is the feeling of separateness, fear is bound to be there. If you want to be free from fear (the state of fearlessness) be in the state of otherlessness, Self.** But that does not mean that your Guru is no longer there. When you dive within and are established in the heart, you will know that your Self is the true nature of your *Sad-Guru.* It is in that state alone that you are ever with your Guru. **Your Love of the Self (*Swatma Bhakti*) i.e., your (ego's) merging into the Self, is verily your true Love of the Guru (*Guru-Bhakti*).**

"Because one has no Love (*Swatma Bhakti*) to listen to the teaching of the Supreme Self ever going on in the heart, one comes out with great enthusiastic delusion. Because of this one needs a Guru outside."

– 'Guru Vachaka Kovai' - Verse 272

Till then all your present love towards this gross name and form in the name of the Love for the Guru *(Guru Bhakti)* is only a divided love, a partial love. This is nothing but the defective state of love.

Man :- If so, is not my present love for You a real one?

Guru :- **The love that springs upon other things can never be the full one *(poorna).* When**

love is full *(poorna)*, the defect in the form of the movement of springing upon other things will not be there. The fullness of love unbroken and all-pervading is 'Not with an other (Non-dual)'. He alone who has love, but 'Not for an other' *(Ananya Bhakti)* is one who has the Full Love (Sampoorna Bhakti).

Man :- Is this 'Love for not an other' (*Ananya Bhakti*) greater than the love I have towards You and even greater than Your Divine Love towards me?

Guru :- Yes! Self-Love is the best and the greatest. This Self-Love alone is the Perfect Love. The final state of refinement of the feeling of Love will be experienced as the unshakable Self-abidance. A state of love less than that, is not at all either Supreme Love *(Para Bhakti)* or the Fullness of Love *(Sampoorna Bhakti)*, and this Love is Self and this Love is Shiva.

Man :- How? Pray explain me.

Guru :- Is not the Self, the single, first person, immutable Awareness? Are you not that Awareness? Why trying to prove it only by the experience of the Supreme Self! Even-now it is not an unknown thing to you. It is within your daily experience. The first person, as you experience it, is 'I am the body' consciousness, the ego. Is it not? See! If you hold a flower, a child or any other

thing, you are expressing your love towards them. These objects of second person are alien to you. Certainly you have more love towards yourself (your body) than towards those things. Yet, do you take your hand, legs or fingers which you really love more than any second or third person objects, to fondle them:- "O my hands! O my legs! O my beautiful fingers I love you so much"? No, you don't. But you do express your love to a flower or a child. Though you love your body more than any other object, you do not indulge in such fancy activities towards your hands etc., which, for you, are the first person. Why don't you? Because the love towards the first person is full and perfect, it needs no action or movement of the feeling to express Itself. **When love abides as itself, it is the full and perfect Love. When the Love takes the form of movement, it is fragmented and becomes desire which springs upon other objects. It is Love when it is in the form of unbroken Existence; it is desire when it is in the form of movement or fragmentation.** As second and third person objects are fragments, your love towards them will be in the form of a mere desire – even towards such a loved one as your Guru. But, when the Love abides in the unbroken being of the first person – the Self, It is full and perfect. This state of Love of Self (*Swatma Bhakti*) is the final state of refinement of love and is

called Supreme Love (*Para Bhakti*), Non-dual Love (*Ananya Bhakti*). **Hence Love is our Being. Desire is our (ego's) raising.** The state of our just being is the state of immutable Bliss *(Ananda)*, the state of indivisible Supreme Love *(Aparichinna Para Bhakti)*.

"...Remaining in one's own real Beingness is the very truth of Supreme Love"

–'Upadesha Undiyar' - Verse 9

So long as you think that your Guru's Divine Love towards you is a love that springs from one entity to an other, certainly this love (your Guru's love towards you) is to be taken as a divided love. Therefore, it is a lesser one than your love towards Self.

"...One who has such 'Love for not an other' drowns in Thee, the Self the form of Bliss."

–'Sri Arunachala Pancharatnam' Verse 5

If we scrutinize deeper, we will find that even the love which the individual had towards himself all this time when he was taking the body and mind as himself, even that very love becomes so trivial that it cannot stand comparison with the love which now flows towards his Guru. Therefore, **the disciple is now ready to be indifferent towards his own mind and body (which he was taking all this time as his Self) and even to sacrifice them for the sake of his Guru. Guru is really his Self.**

Though one's love for oneself is the greatest of all love towards any other objects in the world, when the true Love for the Guru (true Guru Bhakti) dawns,

the love felt by the disciple towards the Guru is greater than even the love towards oneself, the ego. But while experiencing the truth of the Self, the love towards the real Self is found to be greater than one's love even towards one's Guru. All this time it has been said that one loves oneself more than anything else because of the love towards the Self. But, as everyone is under the wrong idea that the ego is one's Self (because ego is a false entity; a reflection of the Self) one does not experience the love towards the real Self. When the Guru who is verily his Self, comes in front of the disciple who is fully matured as to be able to have real Love for Guru (*Guru Bhakti*), he, the disciple is able to feel his love towards the Self - but only in the human form in front of him. Hence it has been pointed out above that the love felt towards the Guru is even greater than the love felt towards oneself, the ego. Though his Guru is his Self and although his love towards his Guru is indirectly Self-love, so long as he sees his Guru – his Self – as a second person, his love towards his Guru is not fully refined into the Self-Love, until he experiences his Guru within as his Self. That is why the Guru now proves and convinces our Man that his Love for the Guru *(Guru Bhakti)* is less than his love for the Self *(Swatma Bhakti).*

Yes, but, why has it been said that even the Guru's love towards the disciple is less than one's Love towards the Self?

In the view of the Guru, there is no one other than the Self. Therefore, His love is truly not a love towards a second entity as disciple. The Guru never views anyone as a disciple – an other than Himself.

But, as the Guru pointed out to the disciple that, **so long as the disciple thinks that the Guru is a separate entity, he (the disciple) has to consider the Guru's love to be a love from one entity to another.** Truly it is not so; because the Guru never sees him as a second. That is why, even the Guru's love towards the disciple (which is only in the disciple's view) is explained as being inferior. If we, with this in mind, listen to the following words of Sri Ramana, "I have neither Guru nor disciple", we shall be able to understand what He really meant. **One who is truly the Guru cannot see anyone as disciple. A Guru is a Guru only in the view of the disciple.**

Thus, when the rain water – the Man, is fully absorbed in the vast lake of his Love for his Guru (*Guru Bhakti*), the Guru stirs him to break away the bank of the lake i.e., the limitation of his Love for the Guru and makes the rain water – the Man, flow into the ocean of Bliss, the Self. Because of his excellent fitness the Man, who was listening to the words of his Guru with rapt attention, was able, at the very time of hearing about the Truth *(shravana)* to complete his reflections *(manana)* and practices (*nidhidhyasana*) simultaneously. He becomes speechless, thoughtless and motionless; he remains drowned in the ocean of Supreme Silence. As the river – the Man reaches its source, the ocean – the Self, the motion of running – the action – effort ceases completely. When the feeling of love has thus been refined to perfection through the aforesaid course, the Man is promoted from the Love for the Guru *(Guru Bhakti)* to the Love for the Self *(Swatma Bhakti)* i.e., from IVth to Vth standard of our

School. The Man, being now freed from the confusion in the form of desire, fear and delusion which he had on account of the wrong outlook of seeing his own Self as multiplicity is well established in the Self through Self-attention. This Self-abidance indeed is the acme of LOVE.

Henceforth, according to the criteria given in the work, everyone of us should examine oneself and find out into which standard one fits and try to qualify for the next. This examination of ourselves as to whether our love is a love for objects *(vishaya bhakti)* or a truly interested Love for God *(Deiva Bhakti)*, should be very sincere, lest we deceive ourselves by over-estimating our qualification and be temporarily contented.

If we are very interested in performing actions (*karmas*) with a view to enjoy happiness in this world and in other worlds, we should know that we are in the 1st standard of our School, the School for purification of love. If we deny the existence of God and even refuse to perform the *Karmas* prescribed by the *Vedas*, and if we, like the wicked described by Saint Ramalinga Swami, prattle, "There is no God; there is no obligation of reaping the fruits of our actions and hence no punishment; there is no Ordainer; there is neither God, soul, bondage *(Pasu, Pati, and Pasam)*; no love (*bhakti*); no Liberation to be obtained; no Grace, no sin or virtue, no penance, no sacred vows, no boons; nothing is there....." – (*Arutpa*)

"...let us eat and drink and dress as we like; let us adorn ourselves with gold and diamond ornaments; let us have sexual enjoyments, big bungalows, television

sets, cars, servants, fame and name and all; this indeed is the goal of human life...", then we should conclude that we have not been admitted as yet even in the 1st standard of our School and that we are still wandering outside the School, not even willing to enter it. If we are in a mood of worshipping the different names and forms of God in so many temples and holy places with the view of obtaining and increasing our happiness in this world and in other worlds, we must understand that we are in the IInd standard of our School. Because, even here, our love (*bhakti*) is only *'vishaya bhakti'* and the different names and forms of God are used as means for the fulfilment of our desires. If our worship is centered on only one name and form of God, but with the love of worldly objects, even then our love is not love for God (*Deiva Bhakti*) but only *'vishaya bhakti'* and the one name and form of God is also used as a means, then we must understand that we are in the IIIrd (a) standard of our School.

But, if after attending the School in any of the Ist, IInd and IIIrd (a) standard, one feels that it is better to revert to the aforesaid worldly life, one becomes a *Yoga Bhrashta* (one fallen from Yoga). Such a thing has no chance to happen for those who have reached the IIIrd(b) standard. There may be some aspirants who believing that they are in IIIrd (a) standard become dispirited as they do not obtain the fulfilment of all their desires and decide to read again the Ist or IInd standard text books, which means that they are fit only for those lower standards.

Some among us, are in the habit of going to many gurus and showing their love to them saying : "My

aim is Liberation only, and not any of the pleasures of this world and of the next. Therefore mine is the Love for the Guru (*Guru Bhakti*), and I have the right qualification for my being in the IVth standard of the School". Some others having the same thought, are in the habit of visiting so many temples of different names and forms of God saying also that their aim is Liberation only.

Because they state that, they do not want any of the pleasures of the world and, that they desire Liberation only, they have to be considered as belonging to IIIrd (b) standard; or because they visit many gurus, it seems that they may have *Guru Bhakti*, the qualification for the IVth standard. It is not so, since their going to different gurus is nothing but going to different names and forms, their love, not being focussed on one point only, is weakened by being scattered towards so many different directions and becomes inefficient to go deep into the instructions of any of the gurus and follow them. They get no real benefit from the teachings of those gurus. Suppose we see one of our friends coming out of a restaurant and entering another one – what does it mean? Does this not show that he has taken nothing to satisfy his hunger from that restaurant? If again we see him coming out of even that restaurant and going to another one, it means that he is still starving! Should he had eaten anything in anyone of the restaurants, would he not return directly to his lodging? Some explain away their actions with such lame excuses: "In that restaurant the rice is well cooked; so I take it from there. In this other one sambar* is excellent; the

vegetables are tasty in the third one; there is a fresh supply of vadai* and appalam* daily in the fourth one; so I go there!" This is exactly like one saying, "I learn *Hathayoga* and *Pranayama* from that guru; I take initiations of *Mantras* from another. When I go to that guru I practise *Karma-Yoga*. I am taught *Bhakti Yoga* by still another one. I practise *Vasi-Yoga* (a form of *Pranayama*) with this guru and I am explained *Advaita* by that one......... Therefore, I go to all these great ones!" What does this really mean? Not even one of these gurus is understood rightly!

> "When the mind remains permanently absorbed in its source whence it had its rising – it is Karma, Bhakti; it is Yoga and Jnana also."
>
> – 'Upadesha Undiyar' - Verse 10

If one is really hungry one will satisfy one's hunger in one restaurant only. One need not run from one restaurant to another. So will it be with sincere aspirants. If the Guru is genuine, it is possible for Him to give the necessary instructions according to the different levels of understandings of the aspirants coming to Him. And, if it is true that the aspirant is desireless for worldly pleasures including name and fame and has an earnest desire for Liberation, there will be no need for him to go to another guru. He will understand the truth of the old saying : "Rolling stone gathers no moss".

If we have such attitude of going to so many gurus, but while secretly having the inner desires for

*Varieties of dishes served in a South Indian Hotel

worldly pleasures, then we must accept the fact that we are only fit to be in the IInd standard of our School. But, on the other hand, if our desirelessness is true, we are then in the state of the aspirant in IIIrd (b) standard, who visits so many gurus in search of his *Sad-Guru* till he finally meets Him. So we cannot claim to have *Guru Bhakti*, the qualification for the IVth standard. The *Guru Bhakti* in the IVth standard is like the chastity of the wife towards her husband. This is why we call the Guru as *'Guru-Natha'* or 'Divine Husband'. Though a chaste woman respects and serves so many elders and brothers-in-law in the family, the respect and love for her husband is of a different nature. She is completely depending on him for her all and everything. So also, though we may have love and respect towards all Sages and Saints who were and are, once we have met our *Sad-Guru*, giving up going to others (particularly for Liberation) as well as giving up practising the teachings of all others but, of our own Guru, is the proof of true *Guru Bhakti*. With a firm determination to adhere only to the Guru once He has been found, with the conviction: "I have come to my Guru for the sake of Liberation. Though It has not been granted to me, I will not go to any other guru. Bondage or Liberation, bad or good, Hell or Heaven – whatever He choses to give, wherever He choses to place me, that is my pleasure", and with accomplished surrender, one should remain in one-pointed love which is the true sign of *Guru Bhakti*. This is the sign by which we can find out that we are qualified to be in the IVth standard of our School.

When Sri Vivekananda met Pavahari Baba, he understood His real greatness and had an impulse to take Him as his Guru. But, when Sri Ramakrishna appeared before him with a pitying look about his foolishness, he realised his mistake and made up his mind never to look upon Pavahari Baba as his Guru, once having been taken as a disciple by Sri Ramakrishna. He then moved with Pavahari Baba as with a revered friend. Though Sri Vivekananda had very great respect for Him, Pavahari Baba was not his Guru. This is the right manner, for a disciple in the IVth standard who has *Guru Bhakti*, to give room in his heart for Sages other than his Guru.

So, those who are going to many gurus, may be classified as belonging to either the IInd standard of our School where one is worshipping so many names and forms of God to satisfy one's selfish requirements; desires for worldly objects, name and fame or to the IIIrd (b) standard where one is searching for one's Guru, if one is truly desireless for worldly pleasures.The following is to be noted when one is searching for his Guru:-

> "To say the truth, he who knows the Truth (*Mei-Jnani*) is different from he who knows of the Truth in the scriptures (*Vijnani*). The only essential thing to do for those who want to cut the knot of the bondage of ignorance, is to quit those who know the scriptures and to join those who abide in the Self, the Knowers of Truth."
>
> –'Guruvachaka Kovai' - Verse 1158

"He who orders" 'do's and 'don'ts" to those who come to him is both Death (*Yama*) and the Creator (*Brahma*) to them. But the truly Divine Guru is one who proves them that nothing is to be accomplished newly by them."

– Guruvachaka Kovai' - Verse 271*

"The only worthy disciplehood which is the steadfast Supreme Devotion that springs up with the merging of the ego into the Light of Supreme Silence (or Self-Awareness), is verily the right Guruship. Thus should you know"

–'Guruvachaka Kovai'- Verse 269

The thought current of the disciple, i.e., his aim and inclinations should be perfectly attuned to that of the Guru. Then only the Master-disciple-relationship is real and a fitting one.

"My Guru is a *Jnani*. He totally condemns occult powers (*Siddhis*). But I would like to acquire them. My mind cannot be at rest until I get *Siddhis*. I don't worry about taking many more births; but I want *Siddhis* along with Jnana and not Jnana only....." "My Guru often advises us to merge within unmindful of the world; but I prefer doing unselfish service (*Karma Yoga*) for my country and for the whole world. I feel that a life of service to humanity is better than the life of one who remains quietly in a remote cave."... "My Guru teaches the Path of Love; but my mind is inclined towards *Raja-Yoga*" "The aim of my

* Note to verse 271 of 'Guruvachaka Kovai':- By ordering those who come to him (guru) to perform so many actions (karmas) such as Japa, Dhyana etc., the 'would be guru' is only loading

Guru is this (pointing out the heart), but mine is that (pointing out to the top of the head)".

The so-called disciples who are making such controversial statements about the teachings of the Gurus, are not the fit disciples to those Gurus and it is not for such people that those Gurus have come. We have to know that to adhere entirely to the teachings of one's Guru, without any reservation such as one's own inclination, principle, aim, wishes etc.. is to have *Sad-Guru Bhakti* as Sri Bhagavan Ramana declares in verse two of *Arunachala Patikam*, "... What have I to say? Thy will is my will and that Itself is my happiness, O Lord of my life, Arunachala !"

Let us have it as an example. During His early days on the Hill when Sri Bhagavan was silent, nobody knew that "Who am I?", the Path of enquiry would be the corner stone of His teachings. In 1903 when

---

(Foot note continued from page 138)

the disciples with a greater burden of new actions (karmas) while they come to him for relief because they are not able to bear with the fruit of the actions they have already accumulated in the past. Instead, the guru is crushing them and killing them. Thus. he plays the part of Death (Yama).

As one, through innumerable birth has to reap unfailingly the fruit of every action performed, by giving the disciples more new actions (karmas) to perform, the 'would be guru' makes them take more births to reap the fruit of their new karmas. Thus he is the Creator (Brahma).

As He knows the truth that Self alone exists without a second, the Sad-Guru convinces those who come to Him that they are ever none other than the Self. When they are made to understand this truth through the power of Silence, they feel that they have nothing more to do, but to BE. As doing alone is action (karma) and not Being, and as karma alone brings birth and death, they are relieved from Yama and Brahma.

a devotee, Sri Shivaprakasam Pillai first visited Sri Bhagavan he expressed the purpose of his visit: "Swamy, I had a desire during my college days to know 'Who I am'. No matter how much I tried through books on psychology and other means, I was not able to understand. Be gracious to enlighten me on this point. Who am I?" **The disciple did not know then that the One who was sitting before him is a unique Guru who has come only to teach the path of enquiry, "Who am I?".** This shows us the accurate tuning of the thought-current which should be between the Guru and the fit disciple. Is it not a wonder that the aim of the disciple lies along with the purpose for which the Guru has come! It is well known that the small brochure 'Who am I?' was given to the whole world only because of this devotee. Such happy unison is the sign of the right relationship between Master and disciple!

From what we have seen above we come to understand that *Jnana* and *Bhakti* – Consciousness (*Chit*) and Bliss (*Ananda*) are the real aspects of *Brahman*. As *Brahman* is Existence (*Sat*) and *Sat* is the Reality, *Bhakti* and *Jnana* – the real aspects of *Brahman* – are nothing but *Sat*, the Reality, i.e., the real *Bhakti* or the real *Jnana* are nothing but *Brahman* Itself. According to the Supreme Teaching:

> " *Brahman* alone shines directly as 'I-I', - the *Atman*"
>
> –Ulladu Narpadu, Supp. - Verse 8

Bhakti and *Jñana* pave the way to the Self. **To be as the Self is Jnana; and without loving the Self how to be It?** So, if one is as Self, it is the state of fullness of

Love. If one has *'Bhakti* one cannot but be as the Self. So *Bhakti* and Jnana are not two but the Self, like the two faces of the same coin.

> "Without the power of gravitation, can anything remain stable on earth? So also, **the pull of gravitation is *Bhakti*; the remaining stable is *Jñana*. Therefore, neither of them can remain without the other."**
>
> – 'Sadanai Saram'

The attainment of the Self is the highest aim of the *Vedas*; and that alone is the real teaching of Bhagavan Ramana. That Path of Knowledge, i.e., the enquiry 'Who am I?' which results in the dawning of Self-Knowledge is explained as 'The Path of Sri Ramana' (Part One). Now, as the love in its perfectly refined state shines as Self alone, the method of purifying the love up to Self-Love *(Swatma Bhakti)* is explained as 'The Path of Sri Ramana' (Part Two). As the nature of the love in the human being varies from the primitive man, to the man who abides in the Self, different grades of instructions are taught by the scriptures to uplift the people step by step. This explains why, different types of teachers are necessary to teach the different grades. Scholars in scriptures, instructors on *Mantras, Yantras, Tantras* etc., expounders *(Pravachanakarthas)* of holy texts (*Puranas* and *Ithihasas*) – though not knowers of the Self, but only students up to the III[rd] standard of our School – are necessary throughout the world throughout ages. To help these students – teachers are necessary for the aspirants who are in a lower standard, until those aspirants are promoted to the next standard. Their preaching of the principles of ethics, devotion to God,

importance of *Karmas*, dispassion towards worldly enjoyments – let us not care whether they follow and acquire knowledge and experience of their own teachings – is always needed for the progress of humanity. But, as it is always seen that they compel their followers to believe that whatever they preach alone is final, and to become fanatics to such an extent of hating all other instructions for further progress when presented to them; we should be careful to see that our own understanding does not get confused by them. We should ourselves, try to find out the standard to which we belong in the School of purification of love with the help of clarifications given above; but, at the same time we should not have any kind of abhorrence towards those teachers, teachings and thoughts with their various peculiar ideas about God, goal, service etc. We should have love and tolerance towards them rather than objecting to their clinging to *Karmas* etc.

Unless they come to us completely disgusted with their practices and ask for a better truth, we should not interfere and disturb the course of others. Let us encourage every one of them in their own way.

> "One who knows the Truth should not create confusion in the minds of ignorants who are attached to karmas..."
>
> –'Bhagavad Gita'- Chapter III – Verse 26.

We should be aware that such is the way in which Sri Ramana gives His approval to the different practices of the various kinds of seekers who come to Him.

CHAPTER 3

Karma*

The truly existing Thing is WE – *Brahman*. Our state of Existence which is unchangeable is *Sat*. As this Existence is only our existence and as we know that "WE ARE", we cannot say that we do not know ourselves. We KNOW the Self. This knowledge is *Chit*. The love that everyone has towards Selfhood 'I-AM' (*Sat-Chit*) is proved in sleep. The reason for that love is that our state of existence itself is Bliss. Therefore, we are Bliss (*Ananda*). Thus we are *Sat-Chit-Ananda*.

As there is no other in such a state of Self - experience, we are ONE. Our state of Oneness is the state of perfect freedom; because there is none other to bind us or to be bound by others. From what we have said we conclude that our nature is the One, *Sat-Chit-Ananda* – Perfect Freedom. What does it mean when we say that we are perfectly free? It means that we have the Power (*Shakti*) to do every thing as we Will (*Ichcha*).

---

* In this chapter the word "Karma" which means "Action" will be used instead of its English equivalent. Karma is the intentional action of one with a moral sense, who under that sense acts as a free agent to produce a desired result. (ref. "Upadesa Saram" pg.7 by B.V. Narasimhaswami - Third Edition - 1938).

As we have such Will-Power it is correct to say that we have perfect freedom. This Will - Power is our own Power and It is We. We and our Power are one and the same.

He who has such Freedom can by His all - powerful Power either remain in His unchanging state of Self or He can bring about an **imaginary change,** limiting the oneness of His unlimited nature as if He had forgotten the Self. Like a man in his dream sees himself by his own mind as the dream-world, living beings there, including a body for himself, so also, by the same Power, during the imaginary change of forgetfulness, He sees Himself, in Himself, by Himself as a limited individual simultaneously with the world, soul and God cognized by that individual. Thus, **We, the Supreme, in the sleep of the imaginary ignorance of the forgetfulness of the Self, see the world, soul and God by the Power of our own Perfect Freedom.**

> "Limiting our unlimited very Being as the body and expanding the sense-knowledge through the body as the world, and seeing ourself as the world and being deluded by it, is the wondrous *Maya*."
>
> – 'Sadanai Saram'

Is not this *Maya* an imaginary one ? Yes, it is our own imagination.

Though we use our natural state of Perfect Freedom in such a way, **by the same freedom we can also remain without using it!** This Self-Freedom is the nature of *Brahman*. By no one or no means can this eternal freedom be destroyed; for, there is no other

Thing (*Sat*) other than We. The whole world, soul and God seen in that state of delusion *(Maya*)* seem to have existence only through our imagination; but really they do not have an existence of their own. Therefore, even in the state of delusion, it is only WE that have the existence (*Sat*); they do not have even a bit of true existence. There is not an other – but WE alone are.

This conception of our own wonderful Power to see our Self as the many – world, soul and God, and also of identifying ourselves as one among the souls, is the first thought 'I' (the ego) which is shining in a limited form in everyone of us. **This is only a thought and not our Self-Awareness**. But even in this individual who knows himself as 'I am a man, I am so and so', the nature of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* does remain. So, it is no wonder that even this imaginary individual likes to be happy. But, as he identifies himself with anyone of the three bodies – gross, subtle and causal – and believes that the corresponding worlds are outside him, he hopes to derive happiness from the objects of the worlds. Alas! Such is the nature of the veil brought about by forgetting the Self that he does not know that happiness is within and that it is nothing but his pure, natural state of Perfect Freedom.

Therefore, the soul *(jeeva**)* makes use of his mind, body and world in as many ways as he can to get happiness. Thus *Karma* begins. **The reason for the starting of *Karmas* is thus found to be the desire to reach one's own natural state of happiness, which is**

* 'Maya' means 'That which is not' and is defined as inexpressible.

** 'Jeeva' is used throughout this chapter, instead of individual soul.

seemingly being forgotten. But, as the Power of Willing *(Ichcha Shakti)* is extroverted through the mind, senses and body, the result is that the individual separates himself more and more away from Happiness, the Source. All his efforts in the form of *Karma* propels him out of Happiness instead of leading him to Happiness. Thus ***Karmas* are not the means to Happiness.** Therefore until one understands that ***Karmas* are only means to misery**, one will go on doing *Karmas*. All the kinds of *Karmas* that one does through mind, speech and body drive one far, far away from one's Goal – Happiness.

When WE, the Supreme Being, seemingly forget our real nature through our Perfect Freedom, from that forgetfulness appears OUR false entity, the *jeeva*, now identifies himself with a body and feels that he is a man. Now he has a limited existence, a limited knowledge and a limited happiness, i.e., he mistakes the nature of his unlimited Existence, Self to be the limited existence of the body. He mistakes the nature of his unlimited non-dual, perfect Knowledge, Self, to be the mind or sense-knowledge which knows other things only (other than Self through the senses). He mistakes the nature of his Ever-Full-Supreme- Bliss, Self, which does not come from any other thing and does not then fade away, to be now the petty, temporary pleasures of the senses, coming from the likes and dislikes towards external objects, not as owned by him for ever, but to be obtained only through merits *(Punya Karmas)*. Thus he degrades himself to a small *jeeva*, a limited *sat-chit-ananda*, and remains discontented! Thus when his unlimited state –

Sat-Chit-Ananda – is imagined to be limited to the nature of the *jeeva*, his unlimited Perfect Freedom also still seems to be a freedom, but only within a limit of originating *Karmas*.

He who once saw not an other, now sees others and is either afraid of them or attracted towards them. Thus he is now unnecessarily deceiving himself with an imagination and drowns himself into innumerable miseries. He becomes happy when the things he liked are obtained, and when the things unliked are destroyed, and he becomes unhappy when the things liked are not obtained and when the things unliked are flourishing. As the achievement of the things liked and the destruction of the things unliked are purely depending upon the result of his own *karmas*, he engages himself into innumerable actions (*karmas*) such as thoughts. speech and activities. But, alas! As his body is short-lived, he has to lose it before all his newly started *karmas* are completed and before the results are experienced. Therefore, he wishes to have a body again to continue his uncompleted *karmas*, to experience their fruit and to start new *karmas* according to his wishes. At this point, God, who is none other than the *jeeva*'s real nature and who according to him is All-powerful, All-knowing and All-merciful, comes to his help.

As, according to his conception, God is All-merciful and All-powerful to give him whatever he wishes, He makes him take such a body (either human, bird, beast etc.,) through which he can continue his previous *karmas* and experience the good and bad results according to his past *karmas*. Thus the

jeeva takes such bodies on account of the past *karmas;* is it not so? But, though the results of his past *karmas* are unlimited, he can experience only a small portion of them through the body which he now has. That portion alone of the results of his past *karmas* which is allotted to him by God to be experienced in this birth is called *'Prarabdha'* (*karmas* that started to give fruit).

All the stored up remaining portion of his past *karmas* which he will have to experience in so many births to come, is called *'Sanchita'* (*karmas* stored up for giving fruit in future births). In this birth the *jeeva* can experience only that portion of pain and pleasure which are included in *Prarabdha.* As soon as all the fruits as pain and pleasure in *Prarabdha* have been experienced and exhausted, the body dies! In other words that which created a body for him and that which is in the form of his present body, is only *Prarabdha*! The end of *Prarabdha,* is the end of the body!

The *jeeva* who has such a body - *Prarabdha* consisting in experiencing pains and pleasures - is the Doer *(Kartha)* of the karmas and it is he who is the Experiencer *(Bhokta)* of those *karmas.* Is it not this *jeeva* who has the doership and the experiencership, having still the aforesaid original freedom of willing and doing, which is naturally in him? That Freedom of Power to act, is in him even during the time of experiencing the fruit of *Prarabdha.* While thus experiencing the *Prarabdha,* he is now using this 'freedom to will and act' to perform, as he has done before, many new *karmas* as well as to continue those which were left incomplete in his past births.

In this manner he is fully engaged in performing innumerable *karmas* until the body dies! Thus the *karmas* which he newly performed in this birth are called *'Agamya'* (*karmas* being performed newly).

Let us suppose a man accumulates 100 bags of *Agamyas* in one of his lifetime. When the body dies, these 100 bags will add up to his *Sanchita*. Out of them one bag containing several kinds of pain and pleasure will be allotted for his next birth to be his *Prarabdha*. As we have said above, the man has the 'original freedom to will and act' to do *Agamyas* in every birth even while experiencing the *Prarabdha*. Suppose in the following birth the man accumulates another 100 bags of *Agamyas*. Now, at the end of that life these 100 bags will be added to the already existing 99 remaining bags of *Sanchita* bringing the number to 199 bags. When and where can he find an end to the recurrence of birth and death, if *Sanchita* is multiplying in this way? Therefore, one should understand that indulging in *karmas* will not lead to Happiness, the Goal. During the lifespan of this body he is doing nothing but accumulating the *Agamya* and exhausting the *Prarabdha*. Since both *Agamya* and *prarabdha* are going on in this life, **the limited human intellect cannot make out which of the karmas is *Agamya* and which is *Prarabdha*.** It is only known to God, the Omniscient!

At times, one's mind may be forcibly drawn to engage in a particular action that will help one in experiencing a particular pain or pleasure, according to *Prarabdha*. For instance, in a past birth a man gave someone a beating; in this present birth he has to

experience the result of having given the beating and, now the time has come to experience that result, and so he has an inclination to go alone for a walk; consequently, none of his friends or relatives are present to prevent him from experiencing that particular *Prarabdha*. As the man is walking alone, some enemies or thieves on the way give him a beating. Then it may perhaps appear to him that his inclination towards the action of going alone may have been an *Agamya*:– "Alas! What I did was wrong! I should not have gone alone. Had I not gone there alone, this would not have happened!" Not only that, he may also conclude that those who beat him have also performed a bad *Agamya*; but both the conclusions are wrong. All those actions are nothing but *Prarabdha*! Can a human mind understand this truth? Certainly not! So, an ignorant has to believe that, all the activities going on in his life are done through his fresh efforts and, that whatever results he experiences are through his fresh efforts only. But, occasions are many in which, one feels that he-she it is facing failure in spite of persistent attempts towards what was aimed at, and it turns out to be contrary to expectations, while at some other times, unexpected pains or pleasures come to one of their own accord.

Anyhow, one has to experience the *Prarabdha*; but, since it was said above, that to distinguish which is *Prarabdha* and which is *Agamya* among the actions performed in the lifetime is impossible for the human mind, and that, God alone is able to understand and ordain the results accordingly: **let no one try to distinguish.** Some may ask: "If it is so, is it totally

useless to try to understand the difference between *Prarabdha* and *Agamya* in our daily life?" No; for those aspirants whose goal is Liberation and who are much interested to act using the discrimination between good and bad (*Papa* and *Punya*), let them follow the classification of *karmas* as given below; by which the good in them may increase and the bad decrease to help towards the purification of their mind.

1. Whenever one feels like doing harm to others, let one save oneself by thinking, "This is an effort of mine towards *Agamya*; let me refrain from this".

2. Whenever one feels that others are abusing us, let one think, "This is due to my *Prarabdha* – I might, have done harm to them previously". With no hate towards them, one should remain indifferent to the experience.

3. Whenever one does good to others, let one think: "This is what I have received from them before. – As this comes under *Prarabdha* - I should not expect anything in return. Even to expect a return is wrong."

4. Whenever others do good to one, let one think: "This help which I am getting now from them comes under *Agamya*. So, I should return it with thanks."

In Short :–1. One's doing wrong to others is *Agamya.*

2. Wrongs done to one is *Prarabdha.*

3. The good which one does to others is *Prarabdha.*

4. The good which is done to one is *Agamya.*

If one classifies in the aforesaid manner the actions performed, it will give an attitude which is *Karma-Yoga* itself, this will purify and mature the mind.

But, the truth may not really be so. The equitable classification may be otherwise, i.e., one's doing wrong to others is an *Agamya* according to our classification. But it might be the returning action of what others have done to one in the past. Thus to act in such a way, it comes under one's *Prarabdha*. Which means that one need not worry about it. Is it not so? In the same manner, one's doing good to others is a *Prarabdha* according to our classification. But, it may be one's Agamic philanthropic action *(Agamya Punya Karma)* not done in the way of clearing off any previous debts of *Prarabdha*. Is it not? In the same manner, we may expand the other remaining two points of the classification also. Should the truth be shown to the human mind, the ego being well-fed will wax and become conceited, thus, making one's mind impure and depriving it of its maturity.

That is why in the plan of the Divine the equitable classification is well veiled to the human mind! Indeed, this is a blessing to help the progress of the human mind. It is for this very reason that our classification, though given above to help the aspirants in purifying and maturing their mind, may not tally with the truth.

Because and through the 'original freedom to will and act', one commits two kinds of mistakes while having the body (i.e., during one's lifetime) which is the *Prarabdha* allotted from one's *Sanchita*. The first mistake one commits is to try either to stop or to decrease the misery that comes through *Prarabdha*, which is ever unavoidable and unalterable. And in the same manner, one tries either to increase or

to hasten the happiness that also comes through *Prarabdha*. So, the only best thing to do is to leave it to the Will of the Lord rather than to exert oneself in trying to use one's freedom in such a way; because this is no longer within the limits of one's 'original freedom to will and act'!

What is meant here by 'Leaving it to the Will of the Lord', is nothing but leaving it to one's own *Prarabdha*. How? Is it not the past will of the individual that framed his present *Prarabdha*? It is thus only his own past will or wish now being fulfilled by God. It does not mean that God has some likes and dislikes, willing or unwilling of His own to do good to an individual. In other words, it only means that the individual should leave to God the sole right to fulfil his wishes or will in the order of priority He wishes. If one does so, since God is All-knowing, He knows what is best to give and when, He will dispose the *Prarabdha* in such a way that when, whatever *Prarabdha* is given to be experienced, it will help the individual to regain his Original State, the Self.

What happens when one does not do so? Whether one likes it or not, the *Prarabdha* has to be experienced anyway. Even then, the ordained *Prarabdha* does give fruit. But, as he does not like to experience the *Prarabdha*, **he loses his balance of mind and discrimination** while forced to undergo the sufferings and joys *(Prarabdha)*. He fights against it and thereby creates *Agamya*. But on the contrary, when the individual has so much love for God that he takes everything as His Will and *Prasad*, he does not

lose his balance of mind and therefore he is able to endure the *Prarabdha* cheerfully. In this case the fruit of the experiencing of the *Prarabdha* will be according to God's expectation, i.e., to mature one's mind for a speedy attainment of the Goal. Thus we may conclude (a): we have the original freedom to yield or not to yield to the Will of God; (b) by yielding to His Will our progress is improved and accelerated; (c) by not yielding to His Will, our progress is minimised and retarded and we will have to undergo a similar experience of *Prarabdha* in future births so that we may progress, as we could have done in this birth itself, had we yielded to the Will of God.

Some may ask whether even God cannot change or arrest the *Prarabdha*. As God is the Ordainer of *Prarabdha* He has the Perfect Freedom either to change or arrest the experiencing of *Prarabdha*, if one completely surrenders to Him, praying to him, "O my Lord, You know my inability to endure the sufferings; protect me by bestowing the strength of endurance", then only, as our original freedom is not used in the way of preventing Him, He can do anything as He wishes; i.e., either to allow the *Prarabdha*, change it or stop it. This is exactly what is proclaimed by Sage Auvaiyar when she said, "For those who surrender in Shiva (Shivaya nama) there is no possibility of danger befalling them. This alone is Free Will. If not surrendered, every thing will become Fate." Not only can He change or arrest the *Prarabdba*, but He can also order the *Agamya* to give fruit immediately by including it in the *Prarabdha*. The story of Markandeya is an illustration for the former and the

story of Adi Shankara and the poor woman for the latter. A brief sketch of each story is given below:-

1. Though according to *Prarabdha* the lifespan of Markandeya was only sixteen years, he obtained the preservation of his life by surrendering to Lord Shiva.

2. While Adi Shankara was begging for His food, a poor lady gave Him a small fruit, but through the window of her hut! It then became known to Adi Shankara that she was so poor as not to be able to open the door for the lack of clothing (on her body) to give Him the fruit through the door. A great compassion rose in His heart. He composed verses in praise of Goddess Lakshmi* (*Kanakadhara Stotram*).

When the Goddess appeared to Him, Adi Shankara asked Her to grant wealth to that poor lady. Goddess Lakshmi pointed out that there was no provision in her *Prarabdha* which He Himself, Lord Shankara, had ordained. Adi Shankara recommended that the present charitable act of that poor woman in giving the small fruit to Him, should be included in her *Prarabdha* and wealth granted to her, then and there. At once there was a shower of gold fruits for her in answer to the recommendation of Adi Shankara. Here it is shown that the fruit of *Agamya* can be included into the *Prarabdha* by the Ordainer.

The second mistake one commits through the 'original freedom to will and act' is, beginning to do *Agamyas* while at the same time allowing the *Prarabdha*

---

* Goddess Lakshmi is the Goddess of prosperity and Adi Shankara is the manifestation of Lord Shiva" (Shankara).

to take its course; i.e., the individual, being compelled by his likes and dislikes to increase the happiness and to remove the miseries in future births, begins to do *Agamya*. Because he does not know that happiness is his own nature, he engages himself in so many different *karmas*, wishfully thinking that he can obtain happiness with the help of his mind, senses, body and objects of the world. In this manner, at the time of the death of the body, innumerable *Agamyas* are added to the already piled up Himalayas of his *Sanchita* making it grow higher and higher.

> "The results of actions having passed away after being experienced, leaving seeds (*vasanas* – tendencies), cast the agent into an ocean of action. Therefore, the results of actions yield not Liberation."
>
> – 'Upadesha Undiyar' - Verse 2

Thus with his 'original freedom to will and act' man commits two kinds of mistakes.

How to rectify these two mistakes? At this stage the God who, according to the conception of the man, is other than himself and All-knowing, All-powerful and All-merciful, shows compassion towards him and when the man who has been suffering throughout so many births in the past, prays to Him that it is His duty to give him the Right-Knowledge, comes to his help. Is it not He who, as we have already said in the previous chapter *'Bhakti'*, when prayed to by the Man for the attainment of worldly objects, gave him the portion of *'Karma Kandas'* of the Vedas as a Teacher

for the 1st and IInd standards of our School, as well as the fruits of his *karmas*? He now answering his prayers, comes to him in the form of a Guru to help him to find out how he has committed the above two mistakes through his 'original freedom to will and act' and to teach him how to use correctly that freedom. To this individual who, having forgotten his Real State of Bliss through his own 'freedom to will and act', is now suffocating for happiness, making efforts in the form of *karmas* with his limited power and knowledge; who else can be a real helper except his loving God? For, He knows that to completely fulfil his desire for happiness is nothing else but, to remove his state of forgetfulness of Self, making him thus become aware of his Original State.

Now, God makes use of the *Sanchita* of the individual in such a way that will help him to get True Knowledge. Is not a portion of the *Sanchita* of the individual selected and allotted as *Prarabdha* whenever he takes a birth? The *karmas* will be selected by God as *Prarabdha* in such a way, i.e., what kind of *karmas* (good or bad), at what time (in which circumstances of which birth) and in which way (the order of priority to, experience pain or pleasure) that while experiencing the results of those *karmas* the individual will grow more and more disgusted and, will be drawn to the conclusion that performing *karmas* is useless. This is His boundless Grace! Is it not?

Not knowing this, but yet believing that God is All-powerful, All-knowing and All-merciful, if the man compellingly prays to Him: "Change my destiny (*Prarabdha*), add more to my happiness and lessen the

miseries in my destiny"; instead of completely surrendering himself to Him, that is only ignorance; it is only finding fault, on account of his little intellect, with God's plan. What does his prayer show? It shows only that he accuses God, whom he praised to be All-knowing, not to be wise enough to determine his *Prarabdha* properly! i.e., he makes the 'All-knowing' – 'not knowing'! In the same manner, when the miseries in his *Prarabdha* are not removed by his prayers, he is dejected. What does this dejection show? It shows that he feels God, whom he praised to be All-powerful is not that powerful enough, to stop his miseries, i.e., through his dejection he makes the 'All-powerful' – 'not powerful'!! Not only this; when he tries to find a reason why God does not stop his miseries, he concludes that He is not willing to do so; what does this conclusion show? It shows that he declares God, whom he praised to be All-merciful, not to be kind in helping him, i.e., through his conclusion he makes the 'All-merciful' – 'merciless'!!! Does it not?

What makes him do so? Is it not his desire for the cessation of miseries and the attainment of happiness? Even a person who is now enjoying a happy life, fears some future unexpected miseries and he worries; or he may be longing for an even happier life in future. Another man who is now suffering, is wistfully longing for the day when the miseries will come to an end and, be replaced by happiness. For these reasons we like to know the future course of our life; but, this is an unnecessary mental activity. Someone asked Sri Bhagavan Ramana: "Can we know about our past lives and about the

future of our present life and about our future births?" Sri Bhagavan answered:- "If the man, who is confused and much worried with the thoughts about his present activities, is given to understand the past and future, will he not be even more confused and miserable? Will his life then not become a hell! It is only ignorance to search for the knowledge of the past and future, while ignoring to know the truth of his present as 'Who am I?".

> "...Without knowing the truth of the present, seeking to know the past and future, is like trying to count without knowing the nature of 'one', the unit."
>
> – 'Ulladu Narpadu' - Verse 15

Although such is the truth, man likes to know about the future pains and pleasures in his life! Astrology comes to his help!! What is astrology? It is a science, based upon the planetary positions at the precise time of man's birth, that helps him to know all the incidents that will happen in his life till death. In short, it is of course a wonderful science to read out what has been ordained by the Lord as one's *Prarabdha!* But three basical conditions are necessary: (1) the accuracy of the time of birth, (2) the high proficiency of the astrologer who draws and makes out the horoscope and (3) the astrologer should not be a mere professionalist praising others for the sake of money. In many cases the findings turn out to be wrong, because one or more of these conditions are absent, thus bringing discredit to astrology. Just like

astrology, palmistry, numerology, I-chin, planchet-reading, fortune-telling and contacting spirits through human medium, are used everywhere for the same purpose, and man often depends on the help obtained through those arts and crafts. But, what for? They can merely show him the miseries and happiness in his future; but they help neither to decrease the miseries nor to increase the happiness. What reply does the man get from even an expert astrologer when, through astrology, he comes to know that he will undergo sufferings *(Prarabdha)*? The astrologer advises him: "Offer a light in the shrine of Saturn; worship in the shrine of nine Planets; feed the poor; and worship such and such aspects of God (gods and goddesses) at such and such time to minimise the effects of the planets, and your troubles will be lessened, and all will be well!"

What does it really mean? Does it not mean: "O man; you cannot alter your *Prarabdha*, take refuge in God. He alone is All-powerful, All-knowing and All-merciful"? Is it not then obvious that the astrologer thus, sends a man to be admitted in the Ist, IInd or IIIrd (a) standard of our School where the feeling of love (*bhakti*) is purified? In which way does he do so? Because he recommends the man to worship so many names and forms of God, (as mentioned in the previous chapter) for the fulfilment of his many desires (to alter the *Prarabdha*). This applies only to the students of Ist, IInd and IIIrd (a) standard of our School, whose power of discrimination is not yet developed to allow them to go beyond the portion of the *Vedas* dealing with the *karmas (Karma-Kanda)*. But, has not

the ripe soul in III[rd] (b) and IV[th] standard of our School always been clinging to God, even before being advised to do so by the astrologer, and even without the astrologer's advise? Only such ripe souls have the ability to rectify the two mistakes (committed through the 'original freedom to will and act') mentioned previously. **Can the advice of an astrologer be of any use to a real enquirer or a real devotee?** To which god or goddess should he, who is on the path of complete surrender, pray to remove – which miseries that will come according to *Prarabdha* or to increase – which happiness that will also come according to *Prarabdha*? Does he not know well that God is only one and that HE Himself, even without his prayer, can alter the *Prarabdha* if HE so wills? There is room to worship so many names and forms of God only for him who does not have this knowledge; but, for him whose heart is blossoming with this knowledge, what is there to be gained through such arts and crafts like astrology etc.? **If an aspirant says that he is longing for Liberation, but at the same time shows a great deal of interest in those arts and crafts, he cannot be a real devotee or a real enquirer**. For, a real devotee will never ask God to alter his *Prarabdha* because he has surrendered his 'original freedom to will and act' to Him; no more a real enquirer will make an effort towards any other thing except to attend to the Self, because he knows the right use of his 'original freedom to will and act'. If he is really a devotee or an enquirer (i.e., a student in the III[rd] (b) or IV[th] standard of our School) will he have a taste or even the slightest inclination towards these arts and crafts? He will certainly not; for he

cannot! Should he do so, it only betrays, in the three ways his lack of love and faith in God. The necessity of these arts and crafts has to vanish in the state of complete surrender. Thus sings Manickavachakar:--

> "The very moment You took me as Your own, I lost my individuality! You may do good or wrong to me! Who am I to interfere, O my Lord!"

From what has been said above it would be wrong if any reader comes to the conclusion that we are declaring that those arts and crafts are bogus or that we hate them. But, let the reader know that we merely conclude that they are good only for the students in I[st], II[nd] and III[rd] (a) standards of our School, but not at all necessary to an aspirant aiming for the Truth only.

If we really have love and faith in God, we should unconditionally surrender ourselves to Him as it is said by Sri Bhagavan Ramana:

> "O Annamalai... Can I have then any grievance? O my (real) Soul, do whatever Thou wilt; but grant me, O Beloved, only ever increasing love for Thy Feet."

-'Sri Arunachala Navamani Malai' - Verse 7

> "O Arunachala....O Bliss born out of Love! What is there for me to say? Thy Will is my will and Thy Will is Itself my happiness."

-'Sri Arunachala Pathikam' - Verse 2

It is such devotee alone who, knowing this well and accepting it, was mentioned in the previous

chapter as a qualified student in the IV[th] standard of our School. And it is only to such student that the method of rectifying the two mistakes in using the 'freedom to will and act', mentioned above, can be explained. Verily, only for the sake of such few devotees, who by experiencing the results of *karmas* through so many births have been maturing through dispassion towards *karmas*, God comes in the form of a Guru! At first the individual thinks that the Guru in front of him is a man like himself. But, as the Guru is really none other but his very Self - which is Love, it is no wonder that he feels such a natural, boundless. irresistable flow of love springing forth towards his Guru.

The Guru now instructs him how to handle his 'original freedom to will and act':- "Using your freedom to know the Reality, your Self, is the only right use. If you do not know or cannot do that, hand-over or surrender completely that freedom to God; so that He may use it on your behalf in any way He likes. That means, either know the right way of using it, or restore it to the hands of God, who knows how to use it". **Thus the Guru places in front of the disciple the path of Self-enquiry and the path of Self-surrender – the path of Knowledge and the path of Love (Jñana Marga and Bhakti Marga).**

From that time onwards the devotee, who takes to either Self-enquiry or Self-surrender, is able to understand that whatever happens in his life is only favourable to lessen the activities of his mind and make him turn Self-ward. Not only that, he is also able to understand that whatever has happened to him in the past through his *Prarabdha* as ordained by God,

before he took to his present spiritual path, were also incidents favourable to lessen the activities of his mind and make him turn Self-ward. To the disciple who is now wondering about his new outlook on life, these loving words of Sri Ramana flash through his mind:- "Know this to be by the Grace of your Guru who is acting from outside to push you within."

As soon as he gets this new outlook on life, he feels ashamed to pray any longer to his God or Guru to alter his destiny (*Prarabdha*); because, he now finds that all the activities going on in his life are only to make him turn Self-ward. In short, in the eyes of such a matured disciple, the *Prarabdha* becomes completely non-existent. He does not use the word *'Prarabdha'*, but points out to it as 'The loving Will of my Lord; His Will is my pleasure!'. Now the surrender completes itself – the life has been changed into one immense Bliss, even the greatest tortures now appear to him, [as sings Saint Appar:

> * "(Where I was placed) under the shade of the Feet of my Lord, I felt as if on the cool bank of a pond in the spring full moon, under the pleasant touch of the southern breeze while the Veena is playing sweet melody".

His mind so transformed is no longer a 'mind', It is Self – his very nature. We can say that, what was previously called 'mind' is now destroyed. Thus we are able to understand that the experiencership

* This verse was sung by Saint Appar. The King threw him in an oven closing the door to kill Saint Appar. He sang this song and came out unharmed.

(*Bhoktrutva*) is destroyed along with the doership (*Kartrutva*). Having his two aspects thus destroyed, the *jeeva's* keeping quite is the 'BE STILL' (*Summa Iru*). And THIS is the real teaching (Upadesha) of the Guru. To BE so STILL is the real service to God and to the Guru. And to BE so STILL is really to live in the Divine. And THIS is the original Natural State.

To will to be so still, i.e., to like to be so still, or to will not to be so still, i.e., to do, is under one's will. For, the 'Perfect Freedom to will and act' is one's very nature – *Brahman*, the Self.

It is said above that the destruction of the doership is itself the destruction of the experiencership also. **The same power – our Perfect Freedom, which imagined a separate entity as a doer, when now, on the contrary, acts in the form of an intense Power to Will (*Ichcha Shakti*) and an intense Power to Act (*Kriya Shakti*) to BE STILL, this un-equalled Power - the DYNAMIC STILLNESS destroys the insignificant, false and imaginary '*ichcha* and *kriya shakti*' used for the creation, sustenance and destruction of the universe.**

At this stage, the unnatural superimposition made by the aforesaid **power of imagination** to see the Self, by the Self, in the Self - as many, **ceases!** Now, as the aspirant experiences the real Awakening into his True Nature which ever shines as ONE with no otherness – the Perfect SELF alone, the sleep of ignorance in which the dream of birth and death of the individual (the doer) appeared, disappears!! When the doership is thus destroyed, who stands there for

experiencership? Hence, the heap or *Sanchita*, with its good and bad results of the *karmas* performed, disappears like a dream, just as both debts and gains in a dream disappear on waking-up. It is what is mentioned in 'Kaivalyam'.

> "Just as a bundle of cotton is burnt to ashes, during the Great Fire of Dissolution, *Sanchita*, the wonderful seed of diversified fruits – innumerable births - is utterly burnt to ashes by the Fire of Knowledge."
>
> – 'Kaivalyam' - Chapter I -Verse 96.

and in Bhagavad Gita:--

> " ... The Fire of Knowledge burns **ALL** *karmas* to ashes."
>
> –'Bhagavad Gita' - Chapter IV - Verse 37.

It has already been said that there will be no more *Agamya* after the doership has been destroyed. Up till now it has been said in scriptures, to pacify the questioners, that the *Prarabdha* which remains after *Sanchita* and *Agamya* have been destroyed is to be experienced, and that it will end only with the death of the body. But, it is to be understood that this is not said for those fully mature aspirants who have a keen discrimination. For, they are expected to apply here a little reflection, i.e., since the doership and the experiencership are the two faces of the *jeeva*, the individual (like the two faces of a coin), how can the experiencership still live after the doership has been destroyed by the dawn of Self-Knowledge? It cannot! When the experiencership is thus lost, who is there to experience the *Prarabdha* and how? No one! Will not

the *Prarabdha* be nullified since there is no experiencer? Therefore, **for the Jnani there is truly none of the three Karmas;** but, as an ignorant and immature aspirant takes the *Jnani* to be a body – he cannot do otherwise - the scriptures have to tell him that the *Jnani* has *Prarabdha* alone. That is why the Supreme, who takes the form of different Gurus at different times to frame rules – the different scriptures – now appearing in the form of Sri Ramana, gives for the benefit of the highly mature souls, the following amendment to the scriptures, which He had Himself framed at different times:-

> "To say that *Sanchita* and *Agamya* will not adhere to a *Jnani*, but *Prarabdha* does remain (to be experienced by Him) is only a superficial reply to the question put by **others.** Just as none of the wives will remain unwidowed when the husband dies, so also, all the three *Karmas* will cease to exist when the doer (ego) dies. Thus should you know"
>
> - 'Ulladu Narpadu – Supplement' - Verse 33

The aspirant who is on the path of Love (*Bhakti*) believes that there is a God or Guru and that He protects him, with the hope that He will do for him whatever is good. Such an aspirant, while using his 'original freedom to will and act', surrenders his doership to Him; therefore he, no longer has to make efforts (*Agamyas*), and thus BEcomes STILL.

There is another kind of aspirants who, not believing in God or Guru, deeply scrutinize the nature

of their efforts and activities while experiencing the different joys and trials of life and who finally come to understand the right use of their 'original freedom to will and act'. Through their 'original freedom to will and act' they withdraw their attention from second and third person objects and by attending to the Self, giving no room for (imaginary) inattention in their quest, they try to regain the Truth of the Self – the state of actionless-ness. Thus they BEcome STILL.

The freedom to like either; to make a complete surrender to God or to dispel the ignorance – in the form of an imaginary inattention, through Self-enquiry, **and the freedom to act accordingly is in the individual; never it is obstructed; for, it is the very nature of Brahman. But for this freedom alone, Moksha or Liberation or the complete relief from miseries would be absolutely impossible and all Gurus and scriptures from time immemorial would become unnecessary and in vain!**

Some, believing that *Jnana* can be obtained only through *Prarabdha*, live lazily, i.e., not even desiring to obtain *Jnana*. But such people show their laziness only so far as their desires and efforts towards obtaining *Jnana* are concerned, putting the blame on *Prarabdha* and being at the mercy of *Prarabdha's* grace! But at the same time they never show laziness towards their worldly activities, i.e., they show their enterprising spirit in trying to obstruct the function of *Prarabdha* (to lessen the miseries and to increase the happiness that come through *Prarabdha*), which can never be obstructed or altered. The net result will be NIL. They who are so enterprising in doing what they

need not and should not do, are lazy in doing what they necessarily should do – the effort to destroy the doership by Self-attention. This is the pinnacle of ignorance! Therefore, those who have faith in God should be enterprising in surrendering the doership to Him, others in enquiring into the Self which is the only right use of their 'freedom to will and act.'

But some among us may ask: "By the limited knowing power *(Alpa-Chit-Shakti)* of the individual which is merely an imaginary reflection of the power of the True and un-limited Knowledge (*Akhanda-Chit-Shakti*), it is impossible to attain the State of Perfection (the Supreme). Is not the Grace of the power of that True unlimited Knowledge which Itself is God or Guru necessary?" Yes, indeed it is necessary! Because help is needed, IT gives help to those who have faith in God, in their efforts to surrender their 'I-ness', by bestowing upon them a tremendous capacity to surrender. This is what is meant by the saying, "Take one step towards God; He will take ten steps towards you." While to the aspirant who, though having no faith in God or Guru, makes intense effort, with enthusiasm, in enquiring into the Self, his Reality, the Self acts as Guru and gives help from within as well as from without (external). IT shines in the form of that clarity of understanding that makes him understand through the outer events in his life, that the outgoing attention IS only misery. IT shines in the form of Bliss within and makes him turn within towards IT and know 'This Bliss is my real state', thus attracting him to merely BE. In this way the Grace of the Guru or God helps even him from within and without.

> "Verily the Self is the Supreme Principle (Reality). Do Thou, Thyself reveal this to me, O Arunachala".
>
> – Arunachala Akshramanamalai - Verse 43

Therefore let neither of these two types of aspirants be worried about the scarcity of the Grace of the Supreme. That Supreme Grace is ever ready to flow - to say the truth, It is ever-flowing. This Revealing is always possible and done by Grace only. Pain and pleasure may come according to *Prarabdha*; but the aspirant ever has his own freedom to remain in that centre, from where he cannot be moved by them: **for, this alone he has freedom and not for obstructing the function of *Prarabdha*.** When the 'freedom to will and act' is applied to like and to make efforts to BE STILL, the doership is destroyed. Along with the doership, the experiencership, which is necessary to experience all the three *karmas*, is also destroyed. Only with this freedom can we reach the Goal; should this freedom not be there, there would be no hope. This Freedom alone – which is nothing but GRACE – paves the way for us to be freed from *karmas*. This alone is the real secret of the karmas. Thus should we know!

APPENDIX - 1

Self - Effort

(Personal Effort)

Our personal effort (self-effort) can be of two kinds:- (1) Effort in generating karmas *(Pravrutti)* and (2) effort in destroying karmas *(Nivrutti)* - When effort is used in generating karmas, there will be no chance of getting Awakened till all the results of karmas are experienced. As *Agamyas* are being generated more and more while experiencing the *Prarabdha*, it is clear that there is no hope for Awakening through the means of karmas. Besides, though the fruits of karmas are experienced and exhausted little by little, they remain in the seed - form of tendencies *(vasanas)* which will never lead to destroying the karmas; but will only be a kindling to generating the karmas.* Thus through self-effort in the form of generating karmas there is no possibility of Awakening or Liberation.

The self-effort in destroying the karmas, is attending to the Self. We can say that Awakening or Liberation is "Being aware of the Self" (for, Self and Its Awareness are one and the same). Suppose a man is said to have awakened from sleep or dream; what does it mean? It means that he has returned to his self-

*Refer to verse 2 of 'Upadesha Undiyar',

awareness (body-consciousness), in which he was before his sleep or dream, i.e., that he has returned from the dream-body and dream world-consciousness to the present body and world-consciousness which is their root. What makes a person who is having a dream wake up? There are two causes:- (1) When the karma which started (to give fruit) a dream comes to an end, the dream ends either in sleep or in waking. (2) When, due to the shock of extreme fear, happiness or misery experienced during a dream it happens that the attention of the dreamer* is knowingly or unknowingly drawn towards himself, the first person in the dream, i. e., his mind or attention is forced to return to the Heart, i.e., towards the first person in the dream. So also when the *Prarabdha* which started the present waking state (life) is exhausted, this waking state (life) comes to an end, i.e., to the state of death, like a dream ends in sleep. In this way, the ending of *Prarabdha* will end only this waking state but cannot give the Awakening.

In the same way, when our attention in this waking state is, through any means, turned towards the Self, not only the waking state (*jagrat*) which is like

---

*The dreamer:- The man who is asleep while dreaming, takes another body. In the dream he moves about with the dream-body while the body in which he moved in the waking state lies motionless. While in the dream, he identifies his dream-body as 'I'. This 'I' is the seer of the dream. All the scenes in the dream are only second or third persons. This person who is a first person in the dream is the dreamer. As the dream-body is different from the waking-body, the experiences of the waker will also be different from those of the dreamer. For instance, a wound experienced by the dreamer on his dream-body, is not experienced on the sleeping body of the waker. (later in the waking state)

the dream, but also our forgetfulness of the Self which is like the state of sleep, both will end leaving us in the Natural State. It may happen that our *Prarabdha* causes a shock in our life of either extreme fear, compassion, misery or joy (as our Sages had to experience to be able to turn to the spiritual). Making use of such favourable circumstances, the individual turns his attention back towards the Self causing thus the great Awakening. That is why Shri Bhagavan advises us to attend to the Self.

How does our attention function when we just wake up from sleep? First, we are aware of the body and then through the senses we are aware of all other objects of the world. Is not our body a second person object? Throughout the waking state our attention dwells upon second and third persons objects only. This attention stops functioning of its own accord when sleep overcomes us. This dwelling upon second and third persons objects is thinking only. The whole waking state is nothing but a bundle of thoughts (i.e., thinking). The same is going on every day from birth to death and the same from creation to dissolution. In short, from sleep to sleep, from birth to death, from creation to dissolution, no being turns its attention towards the first person! **If one turns one's attention towards the first person (the subject) in the waking state, the waking should come to an end, leaving one in the State of Awakening. This Self-ward turn is Being only, and not doing; hence it is not a thought or karma.** Only this kind of Self-effort is called the effort of destroying karmas. This alone will lead to Liberation. As all other efforts of attention are towards

second and third persons objects, they are only generating karmas and will not give Liberation. Such is the truth! Yet, some of us used to say that even *Jnana*, the Awakening, is the result of *Prarabdha*. It is wrong. *Jnana* is not bound by, but transcending the results of karmas. The aforesaid second kind of Self-effort will be known as the Natural State *(Sahaja State)* when it is found to be going on effortlessly. This is the state of Effortless-effort – **Dynamic Stillness**.

APPENDIX - 2

The Resumption of Actions

Birth after Birth

When an individual or *jeeva* leaves the body on account of death and takes another body, by this transfer he changes only his place of residence but not his job (his activities) or his salary (the fruit of his actions). He obtains his new birth, through the Grace of God, with all favourable tendencies started previously to carry on the activities where he had left them undone. Thus what follow him are: (1) the fruit of actions *(karma-phala)* and (2) the tendencies *(vasanas)*.

Prarabdha, the portion selected and allotted from the store of *Sanchita*, will frame the nature of the new birth - to which extent pain and pleasure will be experienced as well as the time of the death of the

body. The fruit of actions remaining in *Sanchita* are the savings of the *jeeva* for the future births. This continuity of action seen in a *jeeva* birth after birth is called 'The Resumption of actions'.

The results of actions are of two kinds; the fruit and the seed. Therefore, the resumption of actions has to be also of two kinds. First, the continuity in the fruits (results) of actions is the resumption of the fruits. Second, the continuity in the seeds (results) of actions is the resumption of the tendencies. The first kind of resumption concerns the face of experiencership of the *jeeva* while the second kind of resumption concerns the face of doership of the *jeeva*. Do we not hear people remarking,' Where is his merit? His *Prarabdha* may be that way. That is why he enjoys good health and became wealthy and famous without any trouble. But, is it possible for all? (i.e., is it possible for those who do not have such a resumption of the fruit of action in their destiny, *Prarabdha* ?)".

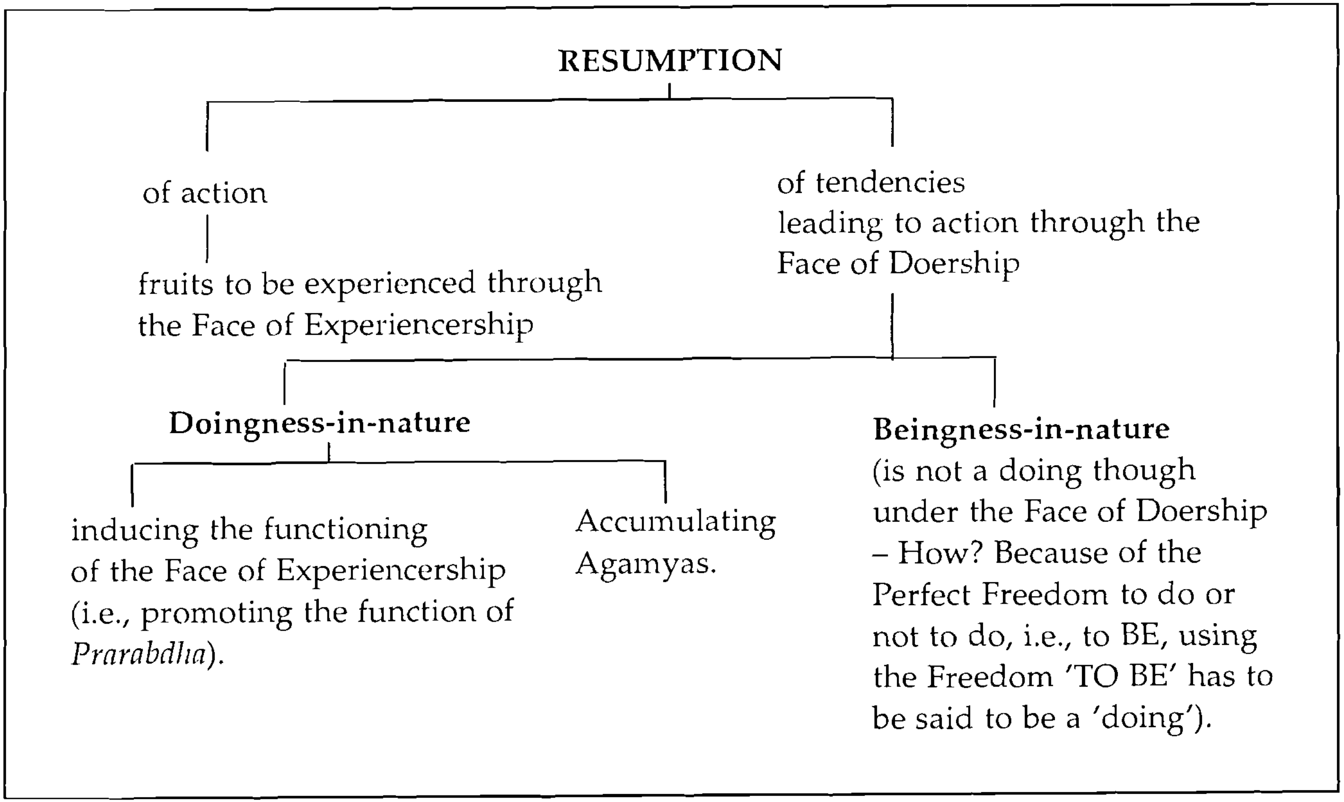
Such talks apply only to the resumption of the fruit of actions which concerns the face of experiencership and not to the second kind of resumption. Some, often remark, "What to say about Shri Ramana? His *Prarabdha* gave Him Liberation. His destiny was such that He became *Jeevanmuktha*. So it is due to the resumption of the fruits in his *Prarabdha*". Talking in such a way only shows a lack of understanding.

In the case of Shri Ramana, truly, it was due to a resumption; but not to the resumption of the fruit of actions concerning the face of experiencership. It was

due to the second kind of resumption concerning the face of doership (i.e., the resumption of His past tendencies towards sadhana); because the fruits of actions of only the endeavours made towards the second and third person can come under *Prarabdha* to feed the face of experiencership, in order to give pain and pleasure to be experienced by mind and body. (See the article 'Self Effort', Appendix I, in which it is explained that the efforts made towards second and third persons are of an extroverted nature). In the same manner when the tendencies have sprouted from the effort towards second and third person, they may be said to be' Doingness-in-nature'. It is only these tendencies that are creating *Agamyas* in every birth through the face of doership; but, the effort called the spiritual practice *(Atma-Sadhana)*, which is made throughout each one of our life to obtain Liberation, is 'Beingness-in nature'. Therefore, out of these two resumptions of tendencies, the tendencies which are of a 'doingness-in-nature' are obstructions towards sadhana, and those which are of a 'beingness-in-nature' are help to our sadhana in this birth. Regarding Bhagavan Shri Ramana it should not be said that His Realization was due to the resumption of the fruit of actions (*Prarabdha*); but to the resumption of the tendencies of 'beingness-in-nature' – in the form of a great love to merely BE *(Sat-Vasana)*.*

Prarabdha is a fruit that can be experienced only through the face of experiencership, while the tendencies can function only through the face of doership. Though the tendencies of the face of

*Read here the diagram on the next page.


RESUMPTION
of action
fruits to be experienced through the Face of Experiencership
of tendencies leading to action through the Face of Doership
Doingness-in-nature
inducing the functioning of the Face of Experiencership (i.e., promoting the function of Prarabdha).
Accumulating Agamyas.
Beingness-in-nature
(is not a doing though under the Face of Doership – How? Because of the Perfect Freedom to do or not to do, i.e., to BE, using the Freedom 'TO BE' has to be said to be a 'doing').

doership, which are necessary to induce the experiences, are in all creatures, the tendencies to accumulate *Agamyas* are present only in humans. By using either 'doingness-in-nature' or 'beingness-in-nature' through the face of doership man accumulates *Agamyas* birth after birth and thereby is drowned in the ocean of karmas and their fruit, or he takes to the practice of Being Still *(Atma-sadhana)* and obtains Liberation. It is this very tendency of 'Beingness~in-nature' that is mentioned by Shri Bhagavan Ramana as the tendency for Perfection in verse 69 of 'The Bridal Garland of Letters' :

> "Do Thou grant me Thy full union with me so that my mind which is filled with worldly tendencies, may be filled with the tendency for Perfection, Thy True Nature, O Arunachala!"

Here Shri Bhagavan means, that the tendency of the mind to always attend to second and third person should be changed to a tendency to always attend to first person only. Hence the prayer to Shri Arunachala for the granting of the tendency towards Beingness (the nature of *Brahman*) by bestowing His union.

The Liberation of an individual is verily the annihilation of the individuality – the ego. This is a suicide to be committed with the 'effort in destroying karmas' 'through the tendency 'Beingness-in-nature'. So long as one's efforts are towards second and third persons (i.e., effort in generating karmas) the tendencies derived from them are 'Doingness-in-nature', which will never yield Liberation, the annihilation of the ego! That tendency 'Beingness-in-nature' derived from the 'effort in destroying karmas'

(i.e., Self-attention) cannot even be called a 'tendency', because it is really the 'non-tendency', 'which has so far been described as 'Beingness-in-nature'. This tendency alone will yield Liberation. That is why Self-attention is said to be a suicide; in verse 7 of Appendix I of 'The Path of Shri Ramana – Part I'. Therefore, let no one 'depend upon *Prarabdha* for Liberation. Liberation is in no way connected with *Prarabdha*. *Prarabdha* belongs to the face of experiencership concerning the fruit of action which is in direct opposition to Self-effort as shown in the diagram. But Liberation is solely connected with the non-tendency -"Beingness-in-nature', i.e., Liberation is possible through the resumption of the tendency' Beingness-in-nature' the state of Doing-lessness or Actionless - action, (i.e., doershipless-action) which is the correct spiritual practice for Liberation, the right Self-attention.

From what has been said above, we must realize the facts that Liberation is not at all bound by *Prarabdha* and that the strength of such spiritual practice *(Atma-Sadhana)* done in past births, will resume itself and help one in the present birth also. Therefore, without doubting whether there is room for Liberation in our *Prarabdha* and being depressed over it by trying to read the *Prarabdha* through astrology, palmistry, I-chin, numerology etc, (for, these arts and crafts cannot reveal it), let us turn Self-ward with great courage and attain Liberation through the tendency 'Beingness-in-nature'.

APPENDIX-3

Personal Cleanliness

(Acharas)

Once a disciple approached a Guru and requested instructions (*upadesha*) for the attainment of God. The Guru said, "God is in you; if you want to know Him, follow the principles of '*Achara*'; be pure and keep yourself ever pure!". The disciple went back home. He referred to the scriptures in order to know everything about '*Acharas*' and began to observe them. He paid great attention in taking bath, washing clothes, cleaning his house, preparing food in a clean manner and even in drinking water! Realizing very soon that his body and clothes got dirty very quikly again, he started to take bath twice a day and change his clothes also. The number of his daily baths was increased up to six in due course! The same thing happened regarding his dress and he became more and more: meticulous in handling and taking his food and in drinking water. A year or two later he approached his Guru again, who, though being happy within himself to note the very high standard of cleanliness in his disciple's body, dress and of his activities remarked again dryly: "Not clean enough! Observe more *Acharas*; be pure; touch not dirty things"

He returned home and began to carry out a code of cleanliness more and more rigid. His excessive

cleanliness became now visible in his life to such an extent that even his wife, children, relatives and friends were afraid as to come near him. In his view even the slightest stain or grain of dust on his clothes was considered as highly filthy.

Touching his own hair or toe appeared to him as the greatest pollution – he had to take so many baths and give his clothes so many washings! Even fasting became a habit with him; whenever the thought happened to cross his mind that his food or drink had been polluted, he would forego them however tasty and expensive they might have been. This man who did so much for his cleanliness, now comes again to his Guru with a heavy heart and a discontended face. He then laments, "What shall I do? My body and clothes ever remain dirty no matter how often I wash them!" The Guru smilingly said, "What a fool you are! Is not the body a bundle of filthy things? Why do you touch it? **You should follow untouchability without fail!".** But alas! The poor man is stunned! He does not understand! "Not to touch my body!! How can I do it?. The Guru replied (with wonder), "What a surprise! Are you the body, the bundle of filthy things? Are you not that THING, the pure Awareness? **When you think that you are the body, you are touching it.** Mistaking the corpse-like body as 'I, is the pollution of touching a corpse! **Adhering strictly to the principles of untouchability - not touching the body – be pure!"**

The force of the divine words of the *Sadguru* awakened him. He pondered over, "Who is that 'I' which is not the body? How and as what do I exist?"

The new turn given by the Guru to the direction of the storm of love towards his absolute purity, which had been raging all these days in him, made him fit for Self-realization – the Awareness of the natural absolute purity of his Self. He, who thus realized the Self, returns home. As he was constantly experiencing the state of "Being not the body", only now he was able to obey to the letter the order of his Guru: **"Remain Ever Pure. "**

As he was indifferent towards 'what he was not', the body was neglected. Since no one was there to care for it, external cleanliness was forsaken. Some months went on. Some of his relatives and friends visited him. "What happened! What a sight! He is so filthy. He does not even clean himself properly after answering the calls of nature! Where have all his *Acharas* gone? Shame! Dirty!!". They ridiculed him. Some, who loved him much approached him and enquired "you used to be such a staunch devotee of cleanliness a few months ago! Where has it gone?" Understandingly smiling he replied: "Only now am I perfectly clean!". Unable to stand it his friends deciding that he would listen only to his Guru who taught him *Acharas*, took him there. They complained to the Guru about the unbecoming changes that had come over their friend. The Guru seeing him now retorted: "This only is *Acharas* truly lived ! This is the Achara Supreme (*Brahmachara*). Really, this is the fruit and perfect state of *Acharas* arrived at by carrying out external cleanliness. Touch him not; do not bring dirt on him. He is the Purest !!" The story ends !!.

"The more and more one forcibly tries to keep the filthy body clean, again and again it becomes dirty. It is only to make us disgusted with the body, and to make us give up our attachment to it (to give up the notion 'I am the body'), that the scriptures recommend external cleanliness *(Acharas)*."

'Guruvachaka Kovai' – Verse 680

APPENDIX-4a

Explanatory Notes on Verse 6 of 'Shri Arunachala Ashtakam'

Verse 6:

"O Heart, the Light of Self-Awareness! Thou, the only Thing (Being), alone art. In Thee is a wondrous Power which is none other than Thee. From It rise, by the whirl of *Prarabdha*, series of subtle (atom-like), dark, mist-like thoughts illumined by the reflected light of the mind. These mists are seen as shadowy pictures of (subtle) world within, on the mirror of this mind-light and, as the pictures of material world outside projected though the five senses such as eyes etc., just like a cinema show projected through a lens. O Hill of Grace, let them appear or let them not appear; what does it matter? They are not apart from Thee."

Explanatory notes:-

Arunachala, the Heart, is the only Thing that exists. "It is the Light of Self-Awareness.

Knowing a thing or not knowing a thing is not the nature of the Self. The Self neither knows nor forgets a thing. That which is beyond knowing and forgetting a thing, is the Self. Knowing or forgetting a thing is the nature of the mind; the ego only. "That which knows objects is not the True Knowledge" says Shri Bhagavan in verse No. 12 of 'Ulladu Narpadu'. 'Being' alone is the True Knowledge and not 'knowing'. Self-Knowledge is subjective and not objective. "Even such knowing the Self is nothing but Being the Self" says Shri Bhagavan in verse No. 26 of 'Upadesha Undiyar'. This 'Being the Self' is the Pure Awareness 'I AM'. Therefore, the knowing or not knowing other objects is the characteristic of the ego. Only in the state of ego, these other objects can have an existence. Thus knowledge and ignorance can be only for the ego and not for the Self. For the Self there is not another. It is most important that we should not forget the fact that Shri Bhagavan Ramana once revealed even a subtler secret, "It is not only that the Self does not know other things but also does not know even: Itself!!"

The world of differentiations, dyads and triads, can shine only in the play of the false knowledge, the ego, as the base. A rope can appear as a snake only in the dim twilight. In broad daylight the rope can be distinctly seen as a rope and the imaginary serpent will never appear. Similarly, it is possible only in the

mind-light (the ignorance) of *Brahman* to be seen as the world of differentiations – dyads and triads. In the original light of the Self the differentiations – names and forms, *dyads* and *triads* etc, – can have no existence and will not appear. The background of darkness in a room and the limited artificial light of a lamp are indispensable for the cinema pictures to appear on the screen. If all of a sudden the bright sunlight gets into the room, the pictures disappear! Why? Because the background of darkness and the artificial light of the lamp have been swallowed by the bright sunlight. This is what is expressed in verse 1 of 'The Five Gems to Shri Arunachala (Shri Arunachala Pancharatnam)' by Shri Bhagavan Ramana;"... Engulfing the entire universe (of names and forms) with the spreading rays of the light of Supreme Knowledge...". It is thus taught that the pictures of the world (of *dyads* and *triads*) cannot exist in the original light of the Self. Therefore, when asked in verse 10 of '*Ulladu Narpadu*' "To whom are the ignorance and knowledge?" We should be able to reply that it is only for the ego.

We should also know that, if the ego is enquired into as to what it is, it will disappear, and thus seeing the non-existence of the ego, is the right understanding of the base of dyads and triads and when thus we understand; the Self-Knowledge dawns, and dyads and triads disappear. In the light of the Self the base of dyads and triads, i. e., the ego, itself is found to be non-existent and hence along with it the non-existence of the dyads and triads. When, Self, the absolute base is experienced, ego the base of dyads and triads will

disappear. As the conclusion of the commentators does not go against the final truth, we have to console ourselves in knowing that their writing will not greatly mislead the reader; but the reader should understand that the intention of Shri Bhagavan is to tell us that the base of the dyads and triads is the ego, and not the Self.

APPENDIX-4b

Explanatory Notes on Verse 8 of 'Ulladu Narpadu'

Verse 8 :

> "If one worships the Supreme in whatever form, giving Him whatever name, it is the way to see the Supreme in that name and form; yet, realizing one's own truth in the truth of that True Thing (the Supreme) and being one with It, having been resolved into It, is the True Seeing (Realization). Thus should you know!"

Notes :

The Supreme *Brahman* has no name and form of Its own. Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (*Sat-Chit-Ananda*) are the three real aspects of *Brahman*, whereas name and form are Its unreal aspects. Therefore, if one worships the Supreme in any name and form, one can see the Supreme in that name and form:- Here, some give the meaning of the verse as, "Worshipping the Supreme in a name and form is

a means to see Him in His formless and nameless nature." This interpretation is wrong. As the Tamil words *'Per uruvil'* have two meanings (1) *'Per uruvil'* = (to see It) in name and form. (2) *'Per uruvil'* = (to see It) without name and form, which would mean that through the worship of a name and form of the Supreme, one can realize the nameless and formless truth of the Supreme; one should know which meaning is to be taken according to the context. If Shri Bhagavan means that the worship of a name and form of the Supreme leads to realize the Supreme in Its formless and nameless Nature (which is the True Seeing), there would have been no need for Him to define the True Seeing of the Supreme in the following lines of the same verse beginning with the word 'yet'. As Shri Bhagavan emphatically defines what is the True Seeing in the last two lines of the same verse, we should understand that the second meaning (*'Per uru + il'*) should not be given to the Tamil words in this context. Further, we should understand what Shri Bhagavan means in this verse from what He has said in verse 3 of *'Arunachala Ashtakam'* also, that the Supreme can be seen only in name and form, if one worships Him in name and form; trying to worship the nameless and formless Supreme is in vain; to realize the nameless and formless Supreme the only way is to dissolve the individuality into the Supreme, through Self-enquiry. In the last two lines of this verse (verse 3) Shri Bhagavan gives His is own experience that the individuality does not exist when the Knowledge of the Supreme – Self, dawns. If at all we want to know how the worship of a name and form of

the Supreme will be an aid to realize the nameless and formless Supreme, it is described in the second chapter 'Bhakti', how the Beloved God worshipped through name and form will incarnate Himself in the form of a Guru. The same Beloved God – has to come again in the name and form of a *Sadguru* to teach the worshipper the Paths of Self-surrender or Self-enquiry, that leads to the Non-dual Awareness – the True Seeing of the Supreme.

APPENDIX-4c

Explanatory Notes on Verse 9,10,11 and 12 of 'Ulladu Narpadu'

In the English translations of verse 9 of *'Ulladu Narpadu'* so far available and in the commentary on it, the Self has been taken and explained as the base for the dyads and triads. In the same manner, the following lines in verse 10 of *'Ulladu Narpadu'*:-' "...To whom are that knowledge and ignorance?..." Have been wrongly translated in English as if the knowledge and ignorance were for the Self, causing thereby the doubt in the minds of the readers, that the Self is subject to knowledge and ignorance! In verse 11 of *'Ulladu Narpadu'* Shri Bhagavan declares that the base for the ignorance and knowledge is the ego. Here also, it is to be regretted that in all the English translations of *'Ulladu Narpadu'* that have so far

appeared, the base referred to above, has been taken as the Self.*

That is the only Truth that exists. If so, it may be asked, "How to account for the existence of the world which is the five kinds of phenomena (i.e., (1) creation - *Shrushtee.* (2) Sustenance - *Sthiti.* (3) Dissolution - *Laya.* (4) Veiling - *Thirodhana.* (5) Unveiling - *Anugraha*)?" The answer of Shri Bhagavan is explained in the following lines:

All these five kinds of phenomena (*Pancha Krutyas*) are not true! How?

In the Self, there is a wondrous Power. Though it is said that there is such a thing as a wondrous Power in IT, it should not be mistaken as a separate second thing. It is the Self Itself. Why Shri Bhagavan designates It as a wondrous Power? In that Power series of atom-like, dark mist-like, subtle things are seen. These are thoughts. Of all these thoughts, 'I', the mind, is the first thought. All other thoughts (mist-like) are seen by this first thought, the mind. The wonder is that (1) the seer, the mind, (2) the thoughts seen as worlds and (3) the reflected light of mind by which alone they are seen, are the SELF alone! That is why Shri Bhagavan designates It as a wondrous Power. The mist-like thoughts, if seen within on the mind, are the pictures of subtle worlds, and if seen through the sense organs of the body, which again is itself one of the mist-like

* It must be mentioned here that the poetical language in which Shri Bhagavan expressed Himself is classical Tamil and it needs some explanations in prose form before it can be understood even by Tamilians.

thoughts, the pictures of gross worlds are seen outside. The whole phenomenon functions by the whirl of *Prarabdha*. The process of seeing the gross world outside has been compared by Shri Bhagavan to the projection of a cinema show on the screen. The lens through which the picture is enlarged on the screen are the five senses through which the subtle, mist-like thought-forms are enlarged and projected as the outside world. The mind which is a reflection of the Self-light of Awareness is what projects the picture of the gross world outside. In the absence of the reflected light, the mind which is also the mirror itself, the pictures of both worlds (subtle and gross) cannot exist. So, they: (1) the outside gross world, (2) the subtle psychic world and (3) the reflected light, the mind, are all untrue. Swoon, sleep, death and dissolution *(Pralaya)* are samples of that state in which the mind-light does not function and consequently the mind and the outside world do not exist. Therefore, it is immaterial to the original Light, Self-Awareness; whether they appear to exist or not. So, Shri Bhagavan says: "The appearance of the world in dream, waking, our whole life, and the creation as well as the non-appearance of the world in swoon, sleep, death and dissolution are not apart from Thee, the Self-Awareness, O Arunachala, the Hill of Grace!"

ॐ

Other Publications of
Sri Ramana Kshetra - Kanvashrama Trust

"The Path of Sri Ramana" Part One
By Sri Sadhu Om.
Price Rs. : 95/-

"Upadesa Undiyar" (The Song of Siva)
By Sri Sadhu Om & Michael James.
Price Rs. 25/-

"The Bridal Garland of Letters to Sri Arunachala"
(Sri Arunachala Aksharamanamalai)
Original Manuscript in Tamil facsimile, transliterated into Roman script with translation into English equivalent, for singing in the original metre. By a devotee.
Price Rs. : 18/-

"A Pilgrimage in South India in 1845, Tiruvannamalai"
By Francoise Boudignon.
Price Rs. 180/-

"The Revelation in the Wilderness"
By Dr. G.H. Mees (Sadhu Ekarasa)
An exposition of the psychology contained in the Tradition of Old.
(In three volumes plus supplement, 1400 pp.)
Price : Rs. 480/-

Books are available at :

1. **Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai**
2. **Arunachalaramana Nilayam, Tiruvannamalai**

THE PATH OF SRI RAMANA

What is true Spirituality? The subject of defining it is vast enough to fill this book - THE PATH OF SRI RAMANA, PART - II.

The correct way as defined and exemplified by Sri Ramana Maharshi, to approach "Spirituality", that is, the life of the Spirit (and not the life of the body), is opened for us. From the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi viewed in the true light thrown by this book we are able to clear our mis-understandings on the subject and prevented from straying away on the so many side paths which are only mistaking and misusing spirituality for ends that have very little to do with it!

